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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE

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BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

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EXPERIENCES OF AN OFFICER'S WIFE IN IRELAND.

CHAPTER I.—HOUSE-HUNTING.

I LEFT Ireland a few days ago, for ever. I motored from Dublin to Kingstown in an armoured car. An armed escort brought me to London, where Scotland Yard took charge of me, and I hope are looking after me still.

However, when I arrived in Ireland I did not know what the manner of my departure would be, and it was indeed a case of "where ignorance is bliss." My husband had gone over in May, soon after we left Germany. On the 4th of May he was at the War Office, and was told he would shortly go to India; on the 5th of May he was ordered to Ireland. They both began with "I," which was the only way that we could account for the mistake, but, alas! it was not a mistake. I followed him in July.

I had utterly refused to stay away any longer, and refused also to be daunted or depressed by the dismal reports I received from my husband and other officers and their wives who were there already, one officer going so far as to head his letter to me with the address "B——y Dublin." Had I not been brought up on Irish hunting books, was I not prepared to love the country and the people, and was it not only a question of a few months before I too should be hunting in Ireland? At last I should meet some of the characters I had read about so often in the 'Irish R.M.' and many other delightful books. I certainly did see a man once who looked like "Slipper," otherwise I never saw, met, or heard of any one who in the least resembled any of the characters in those books. Another illusion gone.

Before leaving London I was taken by a friend to a literary

meeting in Chelsea. I was told the President of the Society was a delightful Irishwoman, and that she was certain to talk about Ireland and Sinn Fein. I was very keen to hear something about the other, or Sinn Fein, side. I knew once I got to Dublin I should only hear and see the military point of view, and I was genuinely interested in the Sinn Feiners, and had a good deal of sympathy with them. The lady was a disappointment: she certainly compared England most unfavourably with Ireland, and if you like to be amused at the expense of your own country, she was amusing. Like all the Irish people I have ever met, she dilated on the wit, gaiety, beauty, &c., of the Irish nation. But all that was neither interesting nor enlightening. As I was leaving, to my embarrassment, she drew me to her and kissed me (mere Irish impulsiveness, I suppose), and said: "Come back and tell me all about it, if they do not knock you on the head." I laughed at her little jest; I did not laugh when that jest nearly became reality.

The Irish Channel was very kind: the boat—a big new one—a great deal more comfortable than many I had travelled on to India. I arrived at Kingstown in a frame of mind ready to be pleased with everything and everybody. That condition lasted about one hour. The taxi ordered to meet me had not arrived. I found out afterwards that taxis ordered by military people seldom, if ever, did arrive, and as I drove in a dirty cab through the filthy Dublin streets my heart sank. Our soldier servant was waiting for us at the hotel. He was an old friend, and I remarked to him that I did not think I should like the place very much. He replied: "We must just make the best of it, madam." He made the best of it by deserting the next day in a blue-serge suit belonging to my husband! I envied him.

I started off the next morning to look for a flat. The house-agent was gloomy and not particularly helpful. In some ways he was just like his English *confrères*. He had the same powerful imagination, the same peculiarly annoying habit of sending one long and fruitless journeys after flats that either had been let three months ago, or else had never been to let at all. He asked me how long I wanted it for, so I answered brightly for as long as the troops remain in Dublin. He replied that that would be for ever, and became gloomier still. He told me the rent of one flat was £9 a week: it seemed a good deal, but I said I would go and look at it. As I was going out of the door he told me it might be £9 a month. I asked facetiously if he was sure that it was not £9 a year. But, as I often noticed, no Irishman ever sees a joke unless he has made it himself, and not always then.

I must explain here that I

shall make no effort to reproduce the innumerable brogues which, as 'Punch' said, "fill Ireland with noise and empty it of sense."

There were not many flats to look at. Dublin was very full, not only of military, but lots of people who had places in the country had been frightened out of them by one side or the other, and were now living in Dublin. At last I found a house that looked promising, outside at any rate. On entering the hall, though, there was a faint smell which reminded me somehow of Malta. I sniffed again; what was it? I suddenly remembered. Surely I was mistaken? At that moment the servant came back, and with her was a goat. I had not been mistaken: no one who has ever lived in Malta could ever forget that smell. I suppose I looked, as I felt, astonished, as the girl smiled and said: "He is generally in the house." I had heard that pigs lived in Irish cabins, but I had never heard that goats lived in Irish flats. However, the goat, though a large one, was but a small shock to the one I was presently to receive. A lady stood in the dining-room, and I explained that I had heard she had a flat to let furnished, and could I see it. I suppose she was struck by what she would call my "English accent," as before answering she said sternly: "Who are you?" I told her, hoping that my husband's official position would vouch both for my respectability and ability to pay the rent. There was a silence, and then to my utter amazement she said: "How dare you come into my house?" and then a torrent of words, mostly unintelligible. I stared at her in utter speechless amazement. All I could think of was that she was evidently quite mad, and how was I to get to the door? But after a few minutes, when she paused for breath, I realised that here was one of the people I had wanted so much to meet—a Sinn Feiner—and that she was not mad, or at least only mad on one subject, England and the English. I had only been twenty-four hours in Ireland. I had not the very faintest idea that any one hated us, and that I, as the wife of an officer, was a special object of hatred. No one had ever hated me in Germany. I had started off that morning to look for a flat in Dublin in exactly the same way as I should have gone out in London. Then I suddenly found myself in the house of a woman who described herself as "England's bitterest enemy." When she got calmer I asked her if she would explain things to me, as I honestly wanted to understand the situation. She told me a great deal about Ireland under Cromwell and Lord French, and of General Dyer's methods in India; she evidently classed them together, and spoke of all three in the same breath with equal bitter-

ness. She then told me that she had prayed to God every night of the war that He would let Germany win, and she was now praying to Him to take the soldiers away from Ireland. I was rather bored by this time, and said that I hoped for my own sake that her present prayers would be more successful than her previous ones, and prepared to go. She escorted me to the door, still talking. I felt safer in the hall, and ventured a remark about Ulster, and how, though Irish, they had fought for England.

"Ulster," she replied in tones of contempt—"Ulster is England, so, of course, the Ulstermen had fought; but had not lots of Irish boys fought too?" though she personally had gone down on her knees to implore them not to.

This lady then asked me why my husband had come to Dublin—"a fine soldier like he must be, to do this coward's work." I could not think of any reason except that he was a soldier; we certainly had not come for pleasure. I was asked why the English Government, who used to send clever men to govern Ireland, now only send fools. This, and similar questions, I could not answer, and suddenly the humour of it all struck me, and I began to laugh. But, poor lady, it was no laughing matter to her. We eventually parted friends, and she told me that I should be quite safe in Dublin, but did not seem so sure about my husband, and I left her with her goat.

I tried one more flat in the same square, one of the best in Dublin. But before entering, warned by my previous experience, I asked the lady if she objected to officers.

This landlady was kinder: she did, and she did not object—any way I might look round. No, she was not exactly loyal; she was neutral, I gathered, with a strong leaning towards Sinn Fein. Unfortunately this flat had little or no furniture in it. It was indescribably dirty. Kitchen there was none. She said she used the cupboard and an oil-stove. I asked for a bathroom, and was told there was a tap on the landing. I thought of my beautiful bathrooms in Germany, with their tiled floors and walls, their endless array of taps, sprays, showers, and douches. Here I was offered a tap on the landing; and once more I was overcome with laughter. Murmuring something about coming back later with my husband, I fled. I could not help seeing the funny side of it all.

Those first few months in Ireland were a mixture of comedy and tragedy, until the tragedy came which blotted out all the comedy in a sea of blood, and made me feel that I could never smile at anything Irish again.

Eventually, a day or two later, I did get a very nice service flat, in a house where

there were eight or nine suites of rooms, several of them already occupied by officers and their wives, and others by six or seven men who shared rooms. I never quite knew what those men were, and I wondered if they were officers why they did not live in barracks. Two, we were told, were in the Ordnance, and the others we knew as "the Hush Hush men." They came in and went out at odd hours, and I never really got to know any of them. Five out of the six are now dead.

I told an officer in the Intelligence Service of my amusing experience while house-hunting, and gave the name and address of the lady. He told me she was a well-known rebel, and that the troops had raided her house several times. I was never quite sure if it had been altogether amusing. It was a novel experience to be hated and told so. It certainly made me think. I realised just a little the intense hatred with which the English are regarded by a large majority of Irish men and women, a hatred which no one in England ever believes in or even tries to understand. If that feeling existed then, seven or eight months ago, it must be a thousand times intensified now, when tragedy after tragedy has occurred to inflame the passions of both sides. It is because I know that feeling exists, and because it was brought forcibly home to me by another woman my very first day in Ireland, that I personally can see no end to the present appalling position. They have not forgiven England yet for Cromwell's deeds. Perhaps when another 250 years have passed they will have forgotten Cromwell; but when another officer's wife goes house-hunting in Dublin in the year 2170 (for, like my house-agent friend, I also think there will be troops in Ireland for ever), doubtless that wife will be met with a long account of the misdeeds of Lord French and Sir Nevil Macready, for time does not soften things in that unhappy country.

CHAPTER II.—TYPES.

I do not think any one has ever written anything about Ireland without alluding, at least once, to the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and I cannot resist the temptation either. They are all so big, so beautiful, and so unutterably stupid. As one approaches the fashionable part of Dublin, they get larger and handsomer in every street. One particularly beautiful specimen stood at the top of Grafton Street, and was a well-known landmark. A friend of mine, if asked whether she was going out that morning, would reply, "I shall just stroll up Grafton Street and look at the policeman, and then home

again." He was certainly well worth looking at. Towards the river, they tail off a little. However, I found it was useless to ask them the simplest question. They smiled quite delightfully, but seldom knew the name of the street at the corner of which they were standing. The destinations of the various trams were a sealed book to them, and I am sure they never knew the time.

The other inhabitants of Dublin which made the most impression on me—literally, indeed—were the fleas. Never have I known such animals. The Italian and Spanish varieties, which I had already encountered, paled into insignificance before these monsters. I never went on a tram without returning with one or more of these creatures, and I never faced the theatre in Dublin, as I was warned I should be eaten alive if I did. Fortunately, I personally escaped the other perils. One poor lady told me in an awestruck whisper that, after going on one particularly filthy tram, which we all knew well, she had found "one of those things the men had in the trenches." I do not think that even Dublin's admirers—and I do not count myself among them — would deny its dirt and its beggars. The beauty of its children is undeniable, at least as far as you can see it for dirt. The beggars nearly drove me distracted; they all looked at the last stage of destitution, and they were so horribly persistent, following one for quite long distances, whining and flattering. They missed many a penny from me, though, by calling me a "lovely lady with Irish eyes," or "you might be Irish yourself now"—another favourite remark—which doubtless well-meant compliments, had they but known it, were the invariable signal for me to put my money back in my pocket. I am Scotch, and I glory in the fact, and I detested being told I looked Irish. Probably they would have been equally disgusted if I had told them that they looked Scotch.

The horses in the cars were the nicest things I saw in Dublin. I was always too busy holding on when I was on an outside car to admire them, but safely in the street again, I could, and did, realise what extraordinarily good and well-kept animals some of them were. The drivers were a curious mixture. Once, in a hoarse whisper, I was told by one old gentleman that he was afraid of the Sinn Feiners himself. He had warned a member of the R.I.C. of an attempted plot against him, and now he was terrified out of his life for fear he would be shot himself. Whether this was really true, or whether he merely hoped to get an extra tip out of me by his pathetic story, I do not know. Anyway, he got his shilling.

Once, on my way to our stables by car, I gave the horse a bit of the sugar I was taking to my own mare, at the same

time asking the driver, "Is your horse a Sinn Feiner too?" Without a moment's hesitation he replied, "Yes, indeed, my lady." I always used to tell the driver where I wanted to go before getting on to the car, as often, after I had climbed laboriously up and given the direction, "The Castle" or "The Royal Hospital," I was told to get down again. They would not take you to these hated places. I always felt furious, but there was nothing for it but to climb ignominiously down and try again.

Other people find so much in the Irish to amuse them. I only found them funny when they were unconsciously so. There was a dear old lady who occupied a flat in our house, who was a perpetual source of amusement to me. She started our first conversation by telling me she had a castle. Most Irish people have, I fancy; they are always talking about them. I only have one lot of friends in England who have a castle, and they are only too thankful if they can let it, furnished, at five guineas a week; but in Ireland they take their castles more seriously. This old lady was always indicating to me —unconsciously, I am sure— how very superior she, as a member of an old Irish family with castle complete, was to every one else. Once when I told her I was going to a dance at Dublin Castle, she said, "A very mixed affair, I expect." I replied meekly that, as it was only for military people, it probably would be mixed. Another time, when I returned from a fortnight in England, she asked me what my friends in England were saying about Ireland. I truthfully replied, "Literally nothing; as far as I can see, no one ever talks, or wants to hear anything at all about Ireland." She said, "Oh, that would be just among the bourgeoise, I suppose." But, though struggling with laughter, I could not help murmuring that all my friends were not "among the bourgeoise." This same old lady had two sons in the British Army, but she was an ardent Sinn Feiner, and had many and varied grievances against the British Government. Some of her remarks on that subject I really dare not reproduce. One day I said something about the coming Christmas in Dublin. "Christmas in Dublin," she replied; "surely all the troops will have gone long before that." I said I sincerely hoped so, but that it seemed very unlikely — and added, "You know if we do all go, you and your friends will probably be murdered," and repeated the formula I had heard so often that it was only the troops who stood between Ireland and civil war. "Well," she said, "leave us to be murdered; can't we even murder each other without England interfering?"

But a few weeks later, when murder was done in that very house, this old lady lay on the floor in her room. She

explained that she had heard that this was the safest thing to do in an air-raid. Not that there had ever been any air-raids in Ireland, of course. She was so terribly frightened when I saw her, that I took her up a lovely Dublin Metropolitan policeman, whom I had found standing aimlessly in the hall. I thought he might be a comfort to her.

I met another very characteristic Irish lady at Dublin Castle one day. I was having tea with an official there, and she had come to complain about her own castle. It was not being properly treated, she said, by the Auxiliaries, or Black and Tans, as she called them, who were billeted there. When she was introduced to my husband and myself, she said severely, "There are far too many military people here." I felt the same, so replied, "I quite agree with you; at least, there are two too many." But afterwards, when my husband was nearly killed, hers was the first message of sympathy that I received.

She was genuinely and utterly horrified at the murders. She felt for us with her whole heart. I think she was typical of many. She had three great loves—Ireland as one nation, the British Empire (though *not* the British Government), and the Royal Irish Constabulary. But there were three things she hated as much as she loved the others. They were—the Germans, Ulster, and the Black and Tans. The last Home Rule Bill she utterly condemned as dividing Ireland in two. But, though she declared herself an ardent Home Ruler, she did not state how she proposed to reconcile her hatred for Ulster with Ireland as one nation. I have repeated her conversation almost word for word. She bears a name which is known throughout Ireland. She has great wealth and a great position, and I found much food for thought in her remarks, but no solution of the problem,—her statements were so hopelessly inconsistent, her feeling so irreconcilable. And I am certain she is only one of many who love as she loves, hate as she hates, and whose loves and hates are daily getting further apart. But I do not propose to discuss politics or religion in these pages. The two are, to a great extent, one in Ireland. I think what I most want to write about is the British Army. I have always understood that Cromwell, of whom I heard so much in Dublin, founded our Army. I can only wonder that Ireland has not finished it. It was Cromwell who said that soldiers ought to be "men who make some conscience of what they do; men who know what they are fighting for, and love what they know." I only know from hearsay of the deeds, chivalry, self-sacrifice, and devotion to duty of our men in France and in the other theatres of war. But what I did see with my own eyes in Ireland was the same devotion to duty,

discipline, and cheerful obedience to orders under the most hateful and disagreeable circumstances: the same never-failing courtesy and good temper under the greatest provocation. Only once did I see them otherwise. And these are the men and boys, we are told, who murder and rob the innocent and peaceful inhabitants, and burn unoffending villages wholesale. In every other country in the world in which he has fought, except Ireland, the British Tommy has made friends. He bears no malice, and he is quite unable to hit a man when he is down. In Germany, as in the war, the New Army carried on the splendid traditions of the Old. A great deal of the soldier's work in Dublin is done at night. He is often short of sleep, the strain on his nerves is appalling, but he never fails, never loses patience. All the horrible work he has to do is carried out with kindness and consideration. But how he despises and hates the inhabitants! I read in the papers one day that they were letting out five hundred of the less dangerous lunatics from the asylums, as they could no longer afford to feed them. I remarked on this to one of our sergeants. "Well, they won't be noticed among all the other lunatics," was his only comment. Even the soldier servants, who came daily to our flats to clean the boots and uniforms of the various officers, refused to do their work in the same room as the Irish servants. They preferred not to mix with them at all, and cleaned and polished on the landings. Two or three of these Irish servants openly said they hated us; the others were civil and obliging—far more so than most English servants—and they never seemed to mind how much they ran up and down stairs. I wonder where the murderers of 21st November got their accurate knowledge of the house. They knew who occupied each room, they made no mistakes, and wasted no time.

One Irish friend who came through Dublin on her way to her home in Limerick told me of the extraordinary vindictiveness of the people there. Her brother had joined the Army, and had been killed in the war. The family had lived in the neighbourhood for generations, and everybody knew them. Yet the sole remark of an old man who worked on the estate, when told of this boy's death in action, was, "A good thing too; one dirty traitor the less."

Another lady told me that her daughter had tried to do some recruiting during the war—in Kerry, I think. She asked an old woman if none of her three sons were joining up. "Indeed no, my lady; it is much too dangerous." The girl said, "It is lucky that every one does not think like you." "It is indeed, my lady," was the answer to that.

All the more honour to those splendid Irishmen who did know the danger, and did not

hesitate to go. Major Redmond's death in action was one of the greatest misfortunes that ever happened to Ireland.

Discharged soldiers have a very indifferent time in Ireland. There are numbers of them in Dublin, but very few venture to wear their service badges or medal ribbons.

Early one morning my husband was the only passenger inside a tram. He was in uniform, and the conductor, looking round to see that he was not observed, bent over him, and drew a Divisional Christmas card of the 5th Division in France out of his breast pocket, and whispered to him, "This is all I have now; they won't even let me wear my medal ribbons. I spent the twelve happiest years of my life in an Irish regiment. I am a Dublin man, but had I known what Ireland is like now, I would never have left the Army."

A few days before the murders, I visited a military hospital near Dublin, where some scores of soldiers, wounded in the war, are still receiving treatment. I walked through the wards, talking to the men. Some of them had come from Lancashire, and had been sent to Dublin, as it was sufficiently near their homes. But I found several Irishmen. One of them was the type I had imagined all Irishmen to be like. I am glad I met this one. He had been totally paralysed for three years, but had had some marvellous operation a few days before, and they hoped he might be able to walk a little in a few months' time. But when I saw him, he was still encased in plaster of Paris and bandages, and in fearful pain. I began to sympathise with him, but he looked up with a cheery grin, and said, "I ought to have better luck in the next war; I have had such bad luck in this."

Had he any opinions on the Irish question? I wonder. I could not ask him.

CHAPTER III.—MY FIRST DINNER-PARTY IN DUBLIN.

After securing a flat, I had gone back to England to fetch my luggage, and, on my return journey, had my first experience of the Irish Custom examination, which had just been started at Holyhead. I was travelling with some friends, and between us we seemed to have at least half the luggage on the train. This was minutely examined for revolvers, ammunition, and bombs. A ham we had was a special object of suspicion. I already hated that ham. I had carried it most of the way. It was heavy, and it nearly made us miss the boat, for the Custom officials would prod it all over. They did not prod us, for which I was thankful, though I admit they should have done: it would have been so

very easy to secrete several revolvers about one's person, to say nothing of ammunition. There was no particular method of searching the luggage at Holyhead, and no counters or tables for the examination. I collected my luggage around me on the pier, as best I could, and felt like an agitated hen with a lot of chickens. Having got most of it together, one had to wait till some one came to examine it, and whether that was before or after the boat started was quite problematical. I dare say the arrangements are better now, but on my subsequent journeys to Ireland I was a privileged person, and was hurried on board the boat by my escort, who were all armed to the teeth.

I passed a dreary month in Dublin. It rained almost without a pause. I believe it did the same everywhere else, but naturally I imagined beautiful summer weather all over England, and felt sure it was only wet and dismal in Ireland.

We had three consecutive fine days for the Dublin Horse Show. During the past twelve months I had attended horse shows in four different countries, but the Dublin Show was the best by a long way. The horses, the jumps, and the riding, especially of the women, were a revelation to me. They were, mostly, very badly turned out, but they could ride.

Horse-show week was the most peaceful one we spent in Ireland. There had been serious misgivings as to whether it would be possible to hold the show at all, owing to the disturbed state of the country. But the Sinn Fein leaders, when delicately approached on the subject, had guaranteed that there should be no disturbances of any sort. In fact, they even went so far as to say that a murder they had arranged for that week in Cork should be put off to the following week. When it is a question of money coming into the country, republicanism takes a second place.

We tried to play tennis, but the sodden courts never dried, the balls got black in a few minutes, and it was a dreary amusement. I had not been allowed to bring my dog from England to Ireland, owing to the quarantine regulations. I suppose it was right, though I really cannot see that, even if a few cases of rabies had occurred in Ireland, they would have been ever noticed among all the other excitements. My horse had not arrived, and I had nothing to ride. I was extremely bored.

An invitation to dinner from a General we had known on the Rhine, and who now occupied a high official post in Dublin, was quite an event. A motor came to fetch us, which was lucky, as I am certain that no taxi would have driven up to his house. I wondered why there was another man sitting beside the driver, and why he kept his hand in his right-hand coat

pocket. I knew the reason for that, and for many other things, before I returned home that night.

The General then lived in an ordinary house on the outskirts of the town. He has since moved into safer quarters. In the room into which we were shown were one or two revolvers lying about, and at a noise on the landing one of the Staff turned sharply, and asked a servant, "What was that?" I smiled, and wondered why he was so nervous.

When we went into the dining-room I found a revolver laid beside each plate—knives, spoons, forks, and revolvers, in fact. The General who had taken me into dinner, said, conversationally, "This is just the sort of night they would come."

I said nothing, but looked round to see where, if "they" came, I could take cover. But the room was singularly bare, and even the tablecloth did not reach the floor. I nervously ate my oysters, and thought that, perhaps, on the whole, I after all preferred dining at home. There were only two other ladies in the party: one, apparently, an enthusiastic Sinn Feiner. She started on my husband, without wasting a moment. He, having ascertained that she did not eat oysters, was quite happy to finish her share, as well as his own, and let her talk. Finding him so unresponsive, she turned to the General, and from then onwards I never got another word in; and we had been so happy discussing racing on the Rhine, a much pleasanter subject than the I.R.A.

The lady soon got very excited, and the whole table had to listen. She was trying to convert us all, I think. The General, who was always charming, listened politely, but obviously bored. She asked him to go round the country with her, to visit the people in the cabins: her poor, unhappy countrymen. "Richer, man for man, than any country in Europe," broke in a cold voice from the other end of the table. The same voice suggested to the General that perhaps it would be as well to take a revolver in his hand before he toured the country. "And a tin of Keating's powder in the other," I added. I had not been a month in Dublin without realising the necessity of never being without the latter. I tried to introduce a more frivolous tone into the conversation, but the lady was so desperately in earnest, so determined to make the most of her opportunities, that I gave it up. In a pleading tone she begged the General to tell her if he did not love her country. It seemed an inopportune question to ask a man, surrounded by a perfect arsenal of revolvers, a man who goes in daily risk of losing his life at the hands of the same "beloved countrymen." He merely grunted, so she turned to me with the same question. I was feeling rather cross. I

wanted to talk about our year in peaceful Germany; nearly every one at the table had been there with the Army of Occupation, and had enjoyed it as much as I had. In fact, I wanted to talk about anything as long as it was not Ireland. I also felt frightened. I did not like the revolvers lying about. They had upset me; and when I am frightened I am always cross. It takes me that way. So I answered, "No; I simply hate it."

Tiresome woman, she would go on; and shortly, as I had expected, she started on Cromwell. I registered a vow that before I went out again in Dublin I would read up carefully what Cromwell had and had not done in Ireland. He lived 250 years ago, it is true, but the deeds of no one else since seem to count at all with a certain class of Irishmen. We once had a house in Buckinghamshire, in the stables of which Cromwell was reputed to have stabled his horses. Very good stables they were too. That was the nearest I had ever got to Cromwell. He was also reputed to have laid waste the surrounding country. But they seem to have forgiven him there. Indeed, they have absolutely forgotten him. I quoted to the Sinn Fein lady the saying of a famous American: "Englishmen never remember history, Irishmen never forget it, and Americans never read it."

Upstairs, after dinner, I had another shock. The bridge-table was ready—quite ready—cards, markers, and a revolver at each corner.

The General told me that ever since the murder of poor Colonel Smythe, one of his best friends, in the Club at Cork, he had always had a revolver ready. It was just the moment of time that it took Colonel Smythe to take his revolver out of his pocket that cost him his life.

Alas! we were not allowed to play bridge even; we were still talked out. In spite of my rudeness to her, she asked me to go and see her, and be introduced to some of her friends who shared her views. But I never went. Soon after the murders of 21st November I received a long letter of sympathy from her, but I did not answer it. Somehow, from a woman holding her views, it struck a false note, and I did not want her pity.

Among other things she told us that night, I heard that for the last twenty years every child in the South of Ireland was brought up to hate England. They learnt to read from books which asked this and similar questions: "Which country in the world do you hate most?" Answer: "England." These same books, by the way, being partly paid for by money supplied by the English taxpayer.

This lady appeared to be bringing up her son in the same way. Her husband was in a British regiment. The pity of it!

The extraordinary thing was that later on, when Dublin was becoming still more dangerous, she telephoned almost daily to the Military for protection; declared that she was in great danger, and must have a guard, which was finally given her. Her love for her countrymen did not seem to be equalled by her trust in them at that time.

We dashed back home at a terrific pace through the crowded streets. Everybody was hurrying to get home before curfew. We hurried because it was never safe for these particular motors to go slowly through Dublin. A fast-moving motor is harder to hit with a bomb than a slow one.

The others hurried to get in before 11 P.M. After that hour, if found in the streets, they would be taken off in a military lorry to spend the night at the nearest police station; or if they did not stop when challenged, they ran the risk of being fired at. The Dublin citizens do not take many risks as a rule.

Our next dinner-party was at the residence—I cannot call it a house—of another and a still higher official. A car was not sent for us, and the taxi we ordered never turned up. Whether because I had stupidly told him where we were going to I do not know, but I suspected that was the reason. We managed to collect another taxi, and started off, already very late. A slight argument with the sentry at the gate made us later still. He evidently did not like our looks, and was unwilling to let us pass in our humble taxi. However, our hostess had guessed the reason for our delay: it was such a very common occurrence in Ireland. She told me that she had the greatest difficulty in entertaining: so many civilians were frightened at being seen too often at her house.

Every motor that drives through certain gates in Dublin is watched, and the number taken, and the occupants noted. Perhaps, naturally, the ordinary residents were not very anxious that it should be their motors, so noted.

The evening passed without incident. I did not actually see any revolvers, though a certain slight bulkiness in several pockets roused my suspicions. I knew where to look now. It always amused me to see with what delicate care the butlers helped visitors on with their coats. There was none of that tugging and pulling down in which English butlers indulge. The butler in Ireland knows better. Automatic pistols go off so easily.

On our way home we were held up at the corner of Grafton Street—the Bond Street of Dublin. A raid was in progress, all traffic was stopped, and we had to wait with the rest till an officer came and investigated us. It was a strange scene, and an unpleasant one. Crowds of scowling, sullen-looking men and

women, and just a handful of very youthful soldiers and one lorry. I felt it quite probable that one side or the other would shoot us. Not on purpose, of course. But it would not be much consolation to know it was only a mistake, and as we sat with half a dozen rifles levelled at our car, I felt distinctly anxious. There was always a chance of a shot in the back from the crowd too. Doubtless, a good many of them carried revolvers.

I decided I would not go out again in Dublin at night; and I never did, except in an armoured lorry on the night of 21st November, and that was the most alarming experience I ever had.

CHAPTER IV.—MOTORING WITH REVOLVERS READY.

Some one asked me the other day, when motoring about twenty-five miles an hour through an English lane, whether we were going too fast, and whether I was nervous. I thought of some of my motor drives in Ireland, and smiled at the idea. There I only felt nervous when we were not going fast. Though, up to 21st November, one only looked on life as pleasantly exciting. I never had the slightest idea of the risks we ran, and that we were ever in any real danger never entered my head. It amused me to motor out to golf with men who sat with revolvers on their knees. I thought they were very careful of themselves, just as I thought that the army of officials who lived in Dublin Castle, and never went outside the gates, valued their lives very highly. I am not quite sure that I do not still think so, though perhaps they are right. We used to joke about these officials, and say they would have to stop in the Castle till they became entitled to their pensions, and then leave Ireland by aeroplane.

The first time I went to play tennis at Dublin Castle, a lady walked round the court during the game, and laid a wreath on the grass. Three of the victims of the 1916 rebellion were buried behind the tennis courts, and there they still lie. I am not sure that some of those who now live in the Castle do not envy them their peace and rest. I often asked friends, who did venture out at intervals, to play tennis or golf with me; but I must own I always had a slight feeling of relief when they refused. I was not exactly frightened, as I have said, and I did not realise the danger they were in, nor that their presence was a source of danger to me; but as things got worse in Dublin, as they rapidly did in the autumn of 1920, I felt that it was better for them not to be in the streets and in unguarded houses. Still I did feel that it was cowardly and unkind not

to ask them sometimes. The one person who I was perfectly convinced was safe, luckily for my peace of mind, was my husband. He was a regimental officer, and had nothing whatever to do with politics, secret service, or police, and we were always told that the regular soldiers were popular, and that the people fully realised, as was, and is now, an undoubted fact, that the British officer stood between them and ruin. For had it not been for the regimental officers, and the discipline they enforced, Dublin would have been burned long ago. The one thing that I cannot endure now when motoring is a back fire or a burst tyre. It is so horribly like a revolver shot, and that, in Dublin, always meant something dreadful happening. I forget I am no longer there, and wonder whether any one I know has been hurt.

I cannot understand how men can go on, week after week, month after month, motoring, living, sleeping, always in danger, always with their hands on their revolvers. They all agree that it is much worse than France, the strain far greater. There is no "behind the line" in Ireland. There is no relief from the atmosphere of murder and spying. At every street corner there is a knot of men and youths, any of whom may throw a bomb or fire a shot at you, in the absolute certainty that, in that event, no one will give them away; and that they will be able to escape, with ease and certainty, down a side street or through a shop or house, leaving the innocent passers-by to bear the brunt of any shots that might be fired in reply.

They all stare into the motor as you pass. Once, when I was walking, an empty motor passed me, which I recognised, as did a man who was standing near me. He stepped out into the road, read the number carefully, and wrote it in a notebook. I could not help turning round and laughing at him, and telling him not to be so ridiculous. I have never seen any one so taken aback. The numbers of these cars are always being changed, which must worry the Sinn Fein picquets a little; but as there are hundreds of these men, who earn good pay by doing nothing but loaf about street corners, spying and listening, I suppose the new numbers are soon known. Of course, they have lists of people they want, and know them all by sight. These lists are often captured in raids, and it must be an odd feeling to see one's own name on the list to be removed as soon as possible.

There is a little terrier running about Dublin Castle which no one will own. He is quite a happy little dog—every one is good to him, every one feeds him; but no one now will call him "my dog." His last three masters have all died violent deaths. The first died for his country fighting in France; the second and third were

murdered in Ireland. That third master I knew rather well, and my husband very well. We were driving to a bridge tournament when we heard of his death. After five years of the war, I imagined I had no feelings left. I used to hear of horror after horror with dry eyes, and seemed to have become incapable of being moved very deeply by anything. But in Dublin these tragedies shook me to the depths. I hated to go out anywhere; I always seemed to hear some bad news, or get mixed up in some horrid disturbance.

One afternoon I was coming back with a friend by tram from a delightful day's golf, when I really had forgotten everything, and had begun to think that Ireland was not such a bad country after all. Just as we reached the middle of Dublin, our tram suddenly stopped. I heard shots, and saw hundreds of people running madly in every direction. We got out of the tram and walked up a side street, where we found an outside car, and got on it. I asked the driver what had happened. He said a soldier had been killed, and that the military had fired back and killed two civilians. In an unguarded moment—though I was generally very careful of what I said in public—I replied, "And a good thing too." He turned round in his seat with a look of fury, and said, "There are not many who would let you live to say that twice." I could not get off the car, so I stayed on, feeling extremely uncomfortable, and feeling, also, that I hated golf and everything else, and that really one could not even attempt to make the best of things in a country where such incidents were possible, in fact common.

I wondered what people would say in England if they were subject to those sorts of excitements and threats when coming home from a peaceful day's golf. It was after I had been in Ireland about two months that I was told by a man, whose opinions should have carried great weight, that I had no right to be over there at all. That he strongly disapproved of officers' wives being in Ireland, and that he would not, on any account, have his own wife there, and that, if he had his own way, he would pack us all back to England at once. It was not safe for us, and, also, it hampered his work, as they were always afraid of reprisals on officers' wives.

There had been several rumours before this that we, the wives, would have to leave Ireland. It was announced in one morning's paper, and contradicted in the next. But after being told this, as I considered, more or less officially, I felt sure that it must be only a matter of days before I should have to pack up and go.

But weeks passed, and noth-

ing more was said. I asked once why we were allowed to stay, and was told that our leaving would make such a bad impression on Ireland. A curious reason for allowing us to remain; or, at least, I thought so later on. At the time I do not suppose that I thought about the matter at all. I was only too glad that I could be with my husband. I even had my little daughter over for a short time. While she was with us, the Sinn Feiners raided a house for arms a few doors from us. There was a good deal of firing, which I really thought for the moment was small boys playing with crackers. The small boys of Dublin had a pleasing habit of exploding crackers to see us jump. I never disappointed them. Lately, I understand, this habit has ceased. Tragedy is far too close to the surface, and an exploded cracker may even draw a pistol shot from an overstrained patrol. But, at that time, I could not imagine real firing in our eminently respectable square, the Mayfair of Dublin, and we leant out of the window to see what was happening. We heard later that two or three people had been slightly wounded, but luckily it was too dark to see anything, and my small daughter went to bed, much disappointed, and hoping that our house would be the next to be raided. Fortunately, when that time came —and it was very far from being a mere raid for arms— she was safe in England. I think I should have gone mad if she had been present on that ghastly day.

She and I used to ride together daily in Phœnix Park, but even there one could not get away from the war. Unfortunately, we never admitted we were at war, though the Irish openly declared they considered they were fighting against England. Mysterious-looking men skulked about under the trees, watching everything and everybody, and numbers of R.I.C. and soldiers surrounded Viceregal Lodge and the Chief Secretary's residence. Later, when in more tragic circumstances, I myself stayed at the latter place, I was very glad the soldiers were there. No guard would have been too large to please me then. I always rode a mare that had been my husband's charger in France. Thanks to the kindness of the War Office, she had been sent over to him from Germany. I had ridden her there, and was rejoiced to see her again in Ireland. She had been wounded in the war, and always wore the three medal ribbons to which she was entitled on her brow-band. The soldiers loved this; not so the Sinn Feiners, and I got many unpleasant looks. I do not know how I could have been so stupid as to ride her with those conspicuous ribbons, but one simply could not take things seriously, and the fact that it was an unsafe thing to do, and that I was asking for

trouble never even entered my head.

If I did worry about anything—and I could not help thinking and worrying sometimes—I was always told that things were getting much better, and that the trouble would soon be over.

A few days before the murders of 21st November, a friend of mine, who had a flat in our house, was held up by two men outside the door at seven o'clock in the evening. They pressed a revolver against her chest, and asked her a number of questions, as to where she lived, and so on. Even this did not greatly alarm us. My husband did tell me that I must always be indoors before it was dark; and I made him promise that he would never walk to barracks alone in the evening. I suppose we must have got callous and indifferent, and every one was so heartily bored with it all, so tired of the place and the people.

I think that the two men who could really write a good book about Ireland in these times are Michael Collins, the Commander-in-Chief of the Republican Army, and Richard Mulcahy, his Chief of Staff. Amusing Irish stories are merely irritating at present, and, personally, I find it almost impossible to imagine that Ireland and the Irish people ever resembled the country and the characters portrayed in the delightful books I loved so much. Those same delicious characters are probably at this moment—if not actually engaged in murder at four hundred pounds per victim—digging trenches and mining roads for the small sum of seven shillings a day—this, I believe, being the tariff of pay in the Republican Army.

But Collins and Mulcahy's reminiscences would be wonderfully interesting and exciting. They might also be amusing, if they have a sense of humour.

Practically every General, on every side, has written his version of the great European war, so perhaps some day these two will give us a book on the Irish war.

One day in their lives, not to speak of the nights, must contain more incident than fifty years of most men's. The innumerable and hairbreadth escapes which, according to our people, they are perpetually making, sometimes over the roof, sometimes through the cellar, would make a dramatic story. Their luck must turn some day, and they will be caught. Then perhaps they will write their book. But perhaps not: they may not have time to write it then.

The countless half-written letters and half-empty cups of tea that they leave behind them,—I must say, though, I was a little shaken when the story of the last marvellous escape was told me, and the narrator explained how two half-empty cups stood on the table, proving clearly, in his mind, that they had been in-

terrupted at afternoon tea, and had escaped by seconds of time.

I meekly suggested that very likely the tea was some that had been left over from breakfast, and that the maid, being Irish, had probably forgotten to clear it away; but my narrator was Irish too, and did not see the joke.

Sometimes Collins & Co. got away fully dressed, as on that occasion. At other times they escaped in shirts or pyjamas. There can be no two opinions as to the courage and brains of these two at least. But what a life; what a waste of two really wonderful men!

I suppose they also motor with their revolvers in their hands, for ever expecting that shout of "Hands up!" Words so familiar to both sides, but, alas! from the Sinn Feiners it is usually followed quickly by a volley of shots.

"Hands up! What is your name?" The order is obeyed, the name given—and then, murder.

CHAPTER V.—RAIDS.

Both officers and men in Dublin rather welcomed a raid than otherwise: it was a break in the monotony of the everlasting guards. There was always the hope of a scrap, of getting a little of their own back. When volunteers were called for, the whole regiment usually responded. Dressed in filthy old clothes and rubber-soled shoes, especially kept for what was frequently very dirty work, they sallied forth in parties of twenty or so, with one or more officers. These raids were usually done at night, and fearful secrecy was observed. My husband came back to our flat about tea-time as usual. He stayed for dinner, and then about 9 o'clock suddenly announced that he was going out again, and would not be back that night. He was always so afraid that a chance word would arouse the suspicions of the Irish servants, who doubtless had their own means of communicating quickly with their friends outside. No one who has not been in Ireland lately could possibly realise the marvellous organisation of the Sinn Feiners, and the enormous sums of money they have at their command for Intelligence work. Their information was wonderfully rapid and accurate, and they do not disdain the humblest instrument. The paper-boys, the woman who sold flowers and who was allowed to sit in the hall of the flats with her baskets, were all part of their Intelligence system. Ever since 1916, when Asquith released the rebel leaders who were then in prison, they have been busy, while we were fighting for our lives, perfecting this system, collecting money, and organising the guerilla war-

fare which they are now waging so successfully. We did our best, by the strictest secrecy, to struggle against this marvellous information.

The officer in charge of these midnight raids never even called for his volunteers until a few minutes before the raid was timed to start. In fact, he actually went round the barrack rooms and roused each man from his bed. With all his many virtues, the British Tommy is a confiding person, and the ladies he met in the streets were often members of the I.R.A. The party then left the barracks in a motor lorry, which went by a circuitous route towards the house which had been selected for the raid. Some few hundred yards away it halted. Leaving a few men to guard the lorry, the rest ran quickly and noiselessly towards the house, the plan of which had been carefully studied before leaving barracks. Parties previously detailed went straight to the doors and various exits. When all were in position, a knock on the door with the butt-end of a rifle aroused the inhabitants. After they had knocked, the two men at the door immediately sprang to one side, to avoid the very strong chance of a shot being fired through the panels from inside. Once the door was opened, the search party entered, leaving a strong picket outside. The occupants of the house usually presented a curious appearance in various odd deshabilles; they were generally terribly frightened, but when they realised the raiders were soldiers and not the much more feared auxiliaries, they became calmer.

Beds, cupboards, chimneys were searched, and carpets raised. Ladies' clothing hanging in wardrobes was always carefully investigated. This was often a favourite hiding-place for revolvers, ammunition, or seditious documents. If the house was moderately clean this work was bearable, though unpleasant. But there is another side to this picture, and some of the descriptions given to me by officers, to whose unhappy lot had fallen the searching of some of the filthy tenement houses in which Dublin slums abound, made me quite ill. A dozen in a room and five or six in a bed was quite usual; and imagine searching such a bed and pulling the mattress to pieces. One officer told me that he had found four human beings, two ducks and a lamb, in one bed, not to speak of hundreds of smaller and unmentionable animals. A few days in hospital subsequent to a raid such as this, to get rid of a complaint common among the great unwashed, were often necessary. It annoyed me so much that the men returning from a raiding party had always to submit to the indignity of being carefully searched. This was due to the whines and complaints, totally unjustifiable, of the Irish rebels, who invariably claimed compensation from the

hated British Government for articles missing from their houses after a raid—articles which they had probably never possessed. Even necessary damage, such as the breaking of a lock of a cupboard, or the accidental smashing of a pane of glass, was always paid for. Truly we are a nation of fools, even if gentlemen.

Of course, these were only small and comparatively unimportant military raids. The big daylight raids were often carried out by combined auxiliary and military forces. It was quite a common occurrence, when going through Dublin, to find a whole street, or even a number of streets, closed. Tanks, lorries, armoured cars, all took part. No one was allowed to pass in or out of the street involved. Personally, I always retreated hurriedly, as did all sensible persons, when I found a raid in progress. There was too much risk from a stray bullet, from either side, or a fragment of a Sinn Fein bomb. These big raids were planned on an elaborate scale. Dozens of sentries picqueted every corner. A house-to-house search was made, and usually numerous arrests were effected. The tanks waddled slowly up and down the street. Ours usually hurried up a little late, and out of breath. There was a narrow street, a hill, and a nasty corner to negotiate, as it left the barracks. The first time it came out it leant for a moment against the garden wall of the civilian hospital opposite, which hastily collapsed like a pack of cards. Within half an hour a claim for compensation for wanton destruction from the hospital authorities was in the Colonel's hands, and, as usual, they were fully paid. But to me, ever the most awe-inspiring sight was the car-loads of auxiliaries: eight or ten splendid-looking men, in a Crossley tender, armed to the teeth, and flying a large black-and-tan flag. On the tan half a large black "B" was painted; on the black bit, the letter "T." I have the flag of the 169th Prussian Infantry that flew over Bonn Barracks before the arrival of our troops, also a Sinn Fein flag captured in a raid in Dublin. I should like to add to my collection one of these new flags: the colours of the only force that since the days of Cromwell have ever really ruled Ireland. I know little of what the auxiliaries have really done, or left undone, but I do know that they have put the fear of God into the Irish rebels. When criticising them, it should never be forgotten that these men are the survivors of the glorious company of those who fought and died for England. They themselves, at least, still remember their fallen comrades. For I saw them, a quiet little group, with uncovered heads, on Armistice Day, during the two minutes of what should have been silence. Only half a dozen other people near me in the crowded noisy street

in which I stood paid any attention to that two minutes appointed for the remembrance of a world's sorrow, and somehow this attitude of callous indifference among the general public gave me more pain than anything else I saw in Ireland. And, God knows, I have seen enough.

The previous year I was in Germany on Armistice Day. All traffic was stopped. All heads bared, and conquerors and conquered alike united in tribute to their glorious dead; for the dead belong to no country.

There is, yet, a third sort of raid, which is undertaken by two or three daring spirits only. It occasionally happens that the whereabouts of some desperate and much-wanted member of the I.R.A. becomes known to the authorities. These rebels are always surrounded by their own particular body of guards and spies. The slightest attempt at an organised raid, on a large scale, would at once give the alarm, and the wanted men would quickly fade away, to appear shortly in another quarter of the town. The only chance of getting them is a sudden dash. They are desperate men, and the raiders know well that shooting is bound to come, and it is just a question of who gets a shot in first. These raids usually end in tragedy.

I had absolutely no idea until after the murders of 21st November of the awful risks run by our men, when one of the few survivors of the original Intelligence Service opened my eyes to the dangers and difficulties of their lives. He would probably never have spoken then had not the horrors of that day shaken him to the depths. He told me of whole nights spent in lonely railway cuttings, when the slightest sound would have resulted in discovery and immediate death. Of long crawls over marshy fields, ending, perhaps, in a sudden dash and a volley of revolver shots. I had seen those men leaving the house, night after night, but I never knew or guessed what their work was, or still less, of the months of training they had had in this special work before coming to Ireland.

Bloodhounds are sometimes used in raids, but are not very successful in Dublin. They quickly lose the scent in a crowded street, or the wanted man probably gets into a waiting motor-car, and escapes them that way. Every old and new method is used to run the murder gang to ground, for until they are caught there can be no settlement in Ireland. But the majority of the population, if not actively helping the murderers, are at best passive. They are either terrorised or indifferent. History tells us that Ireland has always been indifferent to murder.

There was a fourth and unofficial form of raiding, but the time for that has passed now. Four or five of the older sol-

diers, who knew how to use their fists, would go into a public-house on the quays of the Liffey, and order drinks. Then, standing up, they would sing "God Save the King," insisting that every one else should stand up too. There are still Irishmen who love an open fight, and both sides enjoyed these comparatively bloodless battles. Alas! much blood, as well as water, has passed under O'Connell's Bridge since those days, even though so short a time ago, and both sides now, when they fight, fight to kill.

CHAPTER VI.—TRAVELLING IN IRELAND.

A visit to an Irish race-course had for years been an ambition of my life. We arranged to go to a meeting at the Curragh. We were to lunch with some great friends there first, and we were looking forward to it immensely. My husband took a day off, and, dressed in our best, we went down about nine o'clock to the waiting taxi. It actually was there, too. As a rule, it was we who did the waiting. The driver, however, when I told him to drive to Kingsbridge Station, was discouraging. "It is no use going there, the trains are off; you won't get to the races to-day." However, he did not give any reason, and thinking he was talking nonsense, we said we would go and see. The station looked very much as usual. The train was waiting, and there were a few people sitting in the carriages, and a large crowd on the platform. I did not see any engine, but I did see a dozen men of the R.I.C. carrying their rifles. I feared the worst, as I had heard that the railwaymen were refusing to carry armed police or soldiers. But I thought surely the Irish were too sporting to let just a few men spoil a race meeting, and we went to take the tickets. No good. The train would not start. The engine-driver would not bring back his engine until the R.I.C. went home. We asked the officer in charge of the party if he did not think that he could take his men home; but he said it would be impossible, and that he would stay there all day if necessary. He did stay there all day. We heard afterwards that the first train left the station about five o'clock in the afternoon. We extracted a little mild amusement from seeing a few cabs and cars drive up late, laden with luggage, in a wild hurry to catch the trains, which we knew were not going to start; and after waiting dismally about we left. I went home by tram, and my husband back to barracks. I despatched a gloomy telegram to my friends at the Curragh. For once I did not care what I wrote or said, or who heard me. It was an

expensive telegram, but it was a slight relief to my feelings. This was my only attempt to attend races in Ireland: I was too disgusted to try again. Next time I was asked to the Curragh, it was to play tennis. In spotless white serge I sat in the railway carriage, waiting for the train to move. It apparently was going to start this time, and I felt quite cheerful and hopeful. A horrid-looking old man approached me, and said, "Are you going to emigrate? If so, you must go home." I put out an immaculate white shoe and silk-clad leg, and very nearly kicked him. Did I look like an Irish emigrant? I was quite speechless with wrath. My friends shrieked with laughter when I arrived and told them the story, but for once I could not see a joke against myself. The I.R.A. were endeavouring to stop the emigration of all able-bodied men and women. They needed them all in their army, for the women are almost as useful as the men. So they watch the railway stations, and question all likely-looking people, of whom, apparently, I was one. Awful thought!

Our next journey by train was from Dublin to Belfast. We were going on ten days' leave to Scotland. We were very doubtful if we should get away, as the Lord Mayor of Cork was then hunger-striking, and we knew that, if he died, it was probable that all leave would be stopped. But he had been dying for so long; every plan we had made for weeks was always made with the proviso that, if he died, the arrangements would be cancelled. So we determined to start at any rate, and to trust to luck and to the Lord Mayor not to be recalled.

Half-way between Dublin and Belfast the train stopped at a small station, and, to our disgust, about fifty armed R.I.C. boarded the train. There was a fierce and prolonged altercation, in which every one took part. We had allowed ourselves one hour and a half to get from one station to the other at Belfast. We were catching the boat from Larne to Stranraer, and motoring from Stranraer to our destination, where there was a big shoot the next morning. With dismay we saw the minutes slipping away, while the engine-driver argued as to whether he would, or would not, remove his engine. At last he decided to go on. We were very late by then, but when we did arrive at Belfast, more trouble awaited us. About a mile from the station I looked out of the window, and saw soldiers guarding the line with fixed bayonets, one soldier about every fifty yards. What could they want? We were in Ulster, Union Jacks waved from almost every building, and I really felt safe at last. What they did want was some one on our train. The station was crowded with troops, and the porter said it was no good moving our luggage, as neither

passengers nor luggage would be allowed to leave the train. Truly the woes of unfortunate people who travel by train in Ireland are many. The boats to Scotland only leave every twenty-four hours, and twenty-four hours in Belfast out of only ten days' leave was not an inviting prospect. But the soldiers were Scotch. The officer was kind, and accepted my husband's word that he was an officer on leave, and that I was his wife. It seemed to be a woman the soldiers were particularly looking for. I implored them to let me go through. I said I was myself Scotch, that I was going to Scotland, and that I simply must get away from this hateful country. And they smiled, and let me pass. So, walking through lines of bayonets, we eventually left the station, with about seven minutes to get across the city. We did it at a gallop, with our luggage piled on to an outside car. I had rather hated those cars till then; but it is wonderful what they can carry, and what they can do. No one but an Irish jarvey would have galloped through those crowded slippery streets. One large trunk apparently rested on the horse's tail. The driver was perched on my hat-box, and we clung on at the back. Not that I ever did anything else but cling on an outside car. I never did acquire the art of lolling gracefully. We caught the train, and I sank into a seat, with my legs feeling like cotton-wool. I did not really recover till I stood on Scotch soil, where I nearly hugged the porter, with his heavenly Scotch voice. It was good to be there again.

While we were in Scotland, the Lord Mayor of Cork did die, but my husband, to our surprise, was not recalled. Other officers who were on leave from England had to return, because of the railway strikes; but, as we explained, a railway strike or so was nothing to us. They were not noticed among the other disorders in the country we came from. I was amazed at the interest taken in Ireland by the country people where we were staying. Even the old keeper who took me fishing had a great deal to say on the subject. He explained that it was not the murdering he minded so much, as the fact that no one lifted a hand to help the unfortunate victim; and he quoted the case of the poor man who was dragged out of a tram in a crowded Dublin street, without the slightest effort being made by any one to stop the murderers. That, he thought, was very cowardly. I agreed with him it was.

I found people in England at this time were very apathetic about Ireland; there was far more feeling in Scotland.

There is no doubt that the religious question has got a good deal to do with it; Ulster and the West of Scotland are very near akin, and they detest the Roman Catholic Church. There is no doubt,

also, that the sympathies of Roman Catholic countries are largely with the south of Ireland. Even in Belgium, which owes nothing to Ireland, and so much to England, there is a considerable party who actively support the Sinn Fein cause, both with sympathy and with money. This can only be owing to the influence of the Church, which assists the vigorous Sinn Fein propaganda in that country and others. A friend of ours in Brussels, a Belgian lady, took a photograph of my husband to a shop to be framed, shortly after the murders of 21st November. She explained to the woman in the shop that he had been nearly killed in Dublin in the massacre of the previous Sunday. The woman replied, "I am sorry if he was a friend of yours, but what a splendid thing it was.' To me, if I did not know it to be true, this remark would be absolutely unbelievable. I was in Brussels with my husband just after the Armistice, and I shall never forget the enthusiasm of the people for every British soldier. When we got into a tram, every one got up to give us seats, and everybody said something nice about the English General. Two years later, when that same officer is the victim, with many other British officers, of a brutal attack, a Brussels shopkeeper says, "How splendid!"

We got back to Ireland without incident about 5th November. I believe in presentiments, and in no other way can I account for the horrible feeling of depression I felt during the next fortnight. Naturally I did not like going back, but it was more than that. I felt absolutely and utterly miserable. I missed one officer who had a flat in the house, and was told that he had gone on leave. Later on, when I went to see my husband in hospital, I found that, far from being on leave, he had been badly wounded in a raid while we were away. I must own that, at this time, I did feel rather nervous occasionally. There were four Secret Service men living in the house, and two others came in to meals, and I did wonder sometimes if it was safe for them and for us. My husband very frequently slept in barracks. Nearly every night there was firing now, usually just a shot or two, but sometimes a regular volley. The whole atmosphere of the place was more than ever hostile, and I struggled with my depression, and told myself it was only because I had been so thoroughly spoiled in Scotland. But it was no good. I was just miserable. Even the servants in the house seemed different; certainly one of them did. I thought, too, that I was followed home once or twice, and could not understand why such an unimportant person as myself should be watched. But I realise now that they watched every one who went to and from that ill-fated house.

CHAPTER VII.—21ST NOVEMBER.

Extract from the 'Times,' Monday, 22nd November :—

"At 9 o'clock yesterday morning gangs of assassins visited simultaneously a number of selected houses and hotels in Dublin, and in circumstances of revolting brutality murdered at least fourteen British officers and ex-officers, and wounded five more. In two or three cases officers' wives were pulled out of bed, and their husbands murdered in front of them."

Extract from a letter written by Father Dominic, a Roman Catholic priest, who was arrested a few weeks later :—

"Sunday, November 21st, was a wonderful day in Dublin."

Above are the two points of view, English and Sinn Fein, of one of the most ghastly massacres the world has ever known.

It is exactly three months to-day since "Red Sunday" in Dublin. I am writing this on a Sunday morning; like 21st November, it is a fine sunny day. In the distance I hear the sound of church bells. They were ringing that Sunday morning too, summoning the people, some to Mass, and others to murder.

My husband had hurried over his dressing, as he was to take a Church Parade at the Commander-in-Chief's. I was wearing a blouse with a lot of tiresome little buttons. Had it not been for those silly little buttons I should have gone down to breakfast with my husband, and should have had the agony of seeing him and others killed or wounded before my eyes, and should probably have been shot myself. I was standing at my bedroom window struggling with the cuff of my blouse, when I saw a man get over the garden wall. I watched him idly; in spite of five months in Dublin and constant alarms and excitements I felt no fear, and not much anxiety. I thought he had come to see one of the maids. But directly I saw him take a revolver out of his pocket my fears were aroused, and I rushed to the door, and shouted to my husband, who had left the room a few minutes before. It is a bitter thought now that if I had raised the alarm directly I saw the man get over the wall I might have roused some of the other officers, though I believe from the evidence collected that it is fairly clear that several of the murderers were already in the house when this man got into the garden. Their organisation was perfect.

My husband was unarmed. The Staff and regimental officers who occupied flats in this and, I believe, other similar buildings, had been warned and

advised that it would be wiser not to carry revolvers or to keep them in their rooms: on the same principle, I suppose, as the Dublin Metropolitan Police were also unarmed—*i.e.*, if you did not hurt any one no one would hurt you, and if we had no weapons in our rooms we should not be raided, and raids had been frequent in our neighbourhood: accurate information as to where such weapons would be found was apparently always given by servants in the various houses.

The four other officers who had rooms in the house each, I know now, had several revolvers, but they never used them. No one fired a shot. I imagine they were surprised and shot down before they even had time to arm themselves.

Our first thought was for those friends who lived on the lower floors, and, after looking at the man in the garden, my husband rushed down to warn them, and to bolt the hall door.

It was too late. The hall was full of armed men. He was ordered to put his hands up and to give his name. He did so, and added, "There are women in the house." The murderers answered, "We know it." At that moment the door behind my husband opened, and he, fearing that one of the officers he had hoped to warn was coming out of his room, shouted, "Look out, M——." As he spoke they fired and shot my husband through the shoulder, and he fell at the foot of the stairs. He scrambled up, but was shot again through the back. Getting up again, he half-walked and half-crawled upstairs.

The other officer, who had not heard my husband's warning, was also fired at twice, and fell at his wife's feet, she herself being slightly wounded in the knee.

I had remained in my room, watching from the window the man in the garden, who stood a few feet from the back entrance, revolver in hand, ready to fire if any one tried to escape through that door.

I heard six shots only, though subsequently I found at least fifty must have been fired; but the building was a large one, and except for these six they had all been fired on the other side of the house and on the other stairs.

I was in an agony of anxiety, but I had sworn to my husband that I would not leave my window. The door opened, and he came in; his shoulder was covered with blood, but his first words were, "It's all right, darling; they have only hit outlying portions of me. Go back to the window."

He looked much as usual, and as he had apparently walked upstairs (I can never understand now how he did get back to the room alone and unaided), I did not think he could be very badly hurt, so I did as I was told. I saw about twenty men running and cycling away down a lane, and I also saw the man in the

garden being helped to escape by one of the servants from the flat, who came out with a key and let him out through another exit. It was a dreadful moment. I had watched him so carefully, and I did think that he, at least, would be caught.

I then turned to my husband, and found to my horror that he was just losing consciousness, and that the bed on which he was lying was soaked with blood. I took off his coat, and saw four bullet holes—two in his arm and shoulder, a horrible-looking one in his back, and another in front. We found afterwards that these were two entry and two exit holes, but I thought at the time that he had received four wounds. He was conscious again, and I, thinking he was the only one wounded, rushed downstairs for help. Never to my dying day shall I forget the scene in the hall and on the stairs, where four officers had been shot. There were great splashes of blood on the walls, floor, and stairs, bits of plaster were lying about, and on the walls were the marks of innumerable bullets. Fortunately, with two exceptions, the murderers had been so panic-stricken themselves and their hands so shaky that their firing had been wild in the extreme, and to this fact my husband and one other officer owed their lives.

I turned round the corner of the inner hall, and saw a patch of blue, and found a man in bright-blue pyjamas lying at the top of the kitchen stairs. He, I knew, had a flat on the fourth floor. Why they brought him down and shot him in the hall I do not know. I leant over him. He was shot through both lungs. I could do nothing, and I knew if I was going to help my husband I must think only of him, for there was a limit to my physical and mental powers of endurance; so reluctantly I left him. The outer hall was by then full of people, and I found that doctors (there were at least six living within a few hundred yards) had already been sent for. I then heard that two officers were lying dead upstairs, and two were dangerously wounded; in fact, that not one of the six officers who lived in the house had escaped.

I cannot describe the awful feeling of sick horror that came over me, and how I literally shook with mingled feelings of pity and passionate anger. I went to the telephone, rang up the barracks, and implored them to send soldiers at once, and then tore upstairs again to my husband. I seized rugs and hot-water bottles from the bed of an old Irish lady who had the flat below us. I found her in a terrible state of agitation, cursing the British Government, but I had no time to waste on her.

At last the doctors came to my room. They told me they had already seen the other wounded, and, leaving them

with my husband, I went downstairs again. I expected the troops any moment, and I wanted to make sure that the servant I had seen helping one of the murderers to escape was arrested the moment they arrived. I could not rest till I knew the house was surrounded by soldiers. I feared the murderers might come back to finish their bloody task.

At last a party of the regiment arrived, and with them our soldier servant. He was the same man who had deserted the day after I arrived in Dublin. He had not gone far before he repented and returned, and after he had served a term of imprisonment I had pleaded for him, and had been allowed to have him back as our orderly. After all, no one could be blamed for running away from Dublin. Thank God, I had him with me that day. He was the one person in the house who remained unmoved and imperturbable; he had come to clean boots, but it was all one to him, and he did everything for everybody. After an agonising period of uncertainty, the doctors told me they did not consider my husband's wounds dangerous, and shortly afterwards he was moved to the Military Hospital. The other more dangerous cases were taken to a nursing home almost next door, but I was firm, and implored to be allowed to take him to our hospital. I would not have trusted any one I loved in any nursing home in Ireland that day.

It was arranged that I should move my things to the barracks, so after taking my husband to the hospital (where the very sight of the matron and sisters inspired me with confidence), I returned to the flats to lock up. The place filled me with loathing.

I found my orderly waiting for me with tea. I must have drunk buckets of tea that day; every few minutes some one brought me tea or brandy, or both, and I obediently drank it all. He had already tidied up my room and washed the hall and stairs. I found my husband's clothing soaking in the bath, and I could not help smiling, though I never felt less like smiling in my life, when we had a heated altercation as to whether Lux soap or salt was best for taking out blood-stains. I suggested Lux. He preferred salt.

Our regiment was still guarding the house when I returned, and some of the men came up and spoke to me. Several of them had tears in their eyes. They had heard my husband was dead. Many of them had served with him in Malta and India. Others had fought under him at the Dardanelles and in France.

I wonder what those men thought when stretcher after stretcher was carried out in front of them, and they had not been able to fire a shot or strike a blow. I think it speaks well for the magnificent disci-

pline of the regiment that in spite of the fierce anger they felt, not one act of reprisal in any shape or form took place that night or during the ensuing week. Later on a special order of appreciation and thanks was issued by the Commander-in-Chief.

I cannot end this chapter and this most horrible episode of my life (for I shall never write of, and if I can avoid it, never speak of it again) without alluding to the courage and presence of mind of the wives of the murdered officers.

Our house was only one of the many that were visited that morning. In one or two even more ghastly scenes were enacted than those I have tried to describe, but everywhere it was the same story of ruthless murder, and of bravery and self-control on the part of the women. It had been much easier for me than for any of the others, as I did not actually see any of the shooting; I only saw the aftermath.

In one house there was a friend of mine whose husband from the first was seen to be dying, and she had been wounded too by a bullet, meant, I suppose, for him as he lay in her arms. Another friend had been pulled out of bed with her husband, and had seen him led away to be shot. She was in the state of health when no woman could be expected to have much control over her nerves. Another had gone from one dying man to another, for, as she said, she could not bear to think that either of them might recover consciousness before the end and find himself alone.

But except for the hysterical shrieks of one or two of the maids, I never heard a cry or saw any signs of fear. Every one was perfectly quiet and self-controlled. Two or three of the Irish papers, as well as several English ones, said that the one bright spot on that awful morning was the bravery of the wives, and they were right.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE FIVE FOLLOWING DAYS.

It was not until I went back to the military hospital on the afternoon of 21st November that I realised that our house had not been the only one visited by the murderers. The matron there told me that the dead bodies of fourteen British officers lay in the hospital mortuary. Nine of these were in pyjamas. That little sentence shows in what circumstances the majority of them lost their lives. Two officers who had dined at our house on the Saturday night were among the killed. These officers were Roman Catholics, and, I was told, had taken up special service work from a sense of duty. Tale after tale of horror was unfolded to me

until my brain reeled, and I felt I could bear no more. One officer had been butchered in front of his wife. They took some time to kill him. Shortly afterwards she had a little baby. It was born dead, and a few days after she also died. The American Consul had dined at our house the night before the murders. His two hosts were among the murdered. They had played bridge till it was very late, and he had been pressed to stay the night. If he had, there would probably have been an American citizen the less, as there is no doubt the men and boys who visited our house were mostly quite incapable, from fright, of distinguishing friend from foe. One of the wounded officers told me he was placed against a wall in the hall, and eight men took, or tried to take, careful aim at him. One man's hand shook so much that a comrade took his revolver away from him, and another supported his trembling right hand on his left arm. This officer also was a regimental officer, and had nothing to do with police or secret service. Like my husband, he too had a most marvellous escape, and none of the shots he received were vital.

When I left the hospital that afternoon, I felt fairly happy about my husband. He was very anxious that I should leave for England the next day, but I refused to leave him till the end of the week, and it was arranged that I should occupy his room in the barracks, which were near the hospital. When I got there, I found another officer's wife had also arrived to take refuge. Her husband had been very badly wounded, and had been taken to a nursing home near the flats.

She had been told that she could see him again at eight o'clock that night, and asked me to go with her. We ordered a taxi, not realising yet the gravity of the situation. Shortly before eight we heard that no motors of any description were allowed on the streets. The trams were stopped. There had been a fight during the afternoon between the Crown forces and the Sinn Feiners. This, added to the morning's murders, had inflamed both sides in Dublin to a dangerous degree. My friend said she would walk. It was nearly three miles through the nastiest parts of Dublin, and though not realising that this was quite impossible that night, I did not like the idea. Fortunately an armoured lorry was going out on duty. The patrol had orders to stop and search all motors, and it was arranged that we should go with it. We sat in front of the lorry with the driver, and an officer and a party of soldiers behind. I did not see any armour, and felt singularly conspicuous and unsafe. Never, if I live to be a hundred, shall I forget the Dublin streets that night. They were crowded, though one would have thought only fools

would have been out at such a time. There was firing everywhere, and occasionally the crash of a bomb. We dashed along at a terrific pace. The driver was longing to run over some one. The men were longing to shoot. They were mad with passion. One car did not stop when challenged, and they fired at once. Fortunately they missed it, as it was an R.I.C. car, going from one hotel to another, collecting luggage belonging to the survivors of the morning's massacre, who had already been moved into the Castle and other safer places. When we arrived at the nursing home, the scene was a strange one. There was a military guard on it, inside and out. Three officers were lying there, dangerously wounded, and it was thought possible that the Sinn Feiners might come back to finish them off. In spite of all I had seen and heard that day, I could not then think this was possible. But since then a wretched man, who had been badly wounded, was carried out of a hospital on a stretcher and killed in the garden, so I suppose it really was possible, even likely.

The house was dark and quiet, the usual smell of anæsthetics pervaded the place, and in the dim light I saw British soldiers with steel helmets and fixed bayonets standing on the landings in the hall, on the stairs, and before each door. My friend's husband was slightly better, and I persuaded her to return to barracks with me. The drive back was equally exciting, rather more so. The firing was nearer, and we passed several Crossley cars full of Black and Tans. Our armoured lorry made a terrific noise on the paved roads, and as we passed, people fell on their knees on the pavements. Nearly every one had their hands up, and ran distractedly about. I could feel no pity for them. I hated them. I know nothing about reprisals. I believe nothing in Ireland that I do not actually see myself; but I do know that night I should have understood, and forgiven, any act of reprisal by our men. But, as I have already said, no act of reprisal took place.

I do not think I slept more than a couple of hours each night all that week. I never felt tired, never wanted to rest. On Monday, telegrams and telephone messages from England began to pour in. I had been so used to the apathetic attitude of English people, including my own friends and relations, towards Irish affairs, that I was overcome by the flood of messages of sympathy and offers of help that I received. I did not realise how fully the awful affair had been reported in the English papers, or that all the names had been given in full. England seemed awake at last.

I walked about freely on Monday, but on Tuesday I took an outside car, and went back to the flat to finally pack

up our belongings. To my astonishment the car-driver knew who I was; and I was still more astonished when he asked me how my husband was getting on, and whether he would be likely to know any of the men who had shot him. As a matter of fact he would not; it was all over too quickly. Then came a string of leading questions. I looked at the man. He was the usual type of Sinn Feiner. He must have thought me a fool. However, I answered pleasantly and evasively—I might even say untruthfully. When I got to the flat, I found that various odd-looking people had been to ask for me, and had retired discomfited when they heard I was in the barracks. I did not like all this very much, and I packed, looking nervously over my shoulder all the time. Fortunately the faithful soldier servant arrived. He packed perfectly, as he did everything else. Was there ever any one like the British soldier? He looked after me all that week like a nurse. There was always a huge fire in my room when I got back from hospital. My fire lighted and my early morning tea brought me at seven o'clock; my hot bath, and my breakfast in my room a little later. But, for all the care and kindness I had from every one, it was a ghastly week. I was interviewed by innumerable officials and journalists. I signed papers and made statements, and on Tuesday some of the relations of the poor murdered men arrived. I saw them, of course, but I could tell them so little, so painfully little.

The papers I filled in were really rather amusing. Among the questions to be answered were, "How many murders were committed in your presence?" &c., and next, "Were the murderers armed?" I felt inclined to answer this last like the wounded British Tommy, "No, they bit."

On Tuesday night, G.H.Q. suddenly got agitated about me, and all sorts of messages arrived to say that I was not to leave barracks without an armed escort. Apparently they wanted me later as a witness, so I became suddenly precious.

My husband was going on splendidly, so I arranged to cross to England on the Friday. My husband, and the officers in whose charge I was, were most anxious that I should go sooner. On the other hand, the police authorities, who wanted my evidence, were equally anxious that I should not go at all. But I promised faithfully to come back, and I was allowed to depart. I felt that I must really go away for a little, or I should go mad. It was horrible, feeling that the loafers at the street corners might now be watching and waiting for me. Incidents I had laughed at before now became very real to me. I had gone through a great deal, and I could not rest in Ireland. I wanted to go to England; I wanted to feel safe. Above all,

I wanted to get away from the sight and sound of revolvers. All night long, too, there were sounds of rifle-shots, and the rattle of armoured cars returning from raids and patrols. These drew up, and the officer in charge made his report just below my window, which was not conducive to slumber. Occasionally a sentry got nervous, and let off his rifle at a real or imaginary shadow in the garden of the female lunatic asylum opposite. This garden had been used as cover for Sinn Fein snipers, and the house had been hit more than once. The other charming view from my window was over the grounds of the pauper hospital. I really do not know which was the most cheerful outlook.

I motored to the Military Hospital two or three times, escorted by auxiliaries. It gave me confidence just to look at them. They were so big, and so very fully armed. They also took me to the boat when I at last left Dublin. An officer and the faithful soldier servant went with me to my destination in England. It was right away in the country, and it seemed like heaven. My motor drew up, the hall door opened, and I saw the big square hall and a huge log fire. My eyes filled with tears. Ireland seemed like an evil dream.

CHAPTER IX.—I RETURN TO DUBLIN—DUBLIN PRISONS.

After I had been in England a few days, I began to feel as if I had imagined the whole of the events of the last awful week. Surely such things could not have happened in the twentieth century in what we supposed was a civilised country. It was utterly impossible. Night after night I went over the whole of that ghastly day in my sleep. Every night I woke up to see a ghoulish figure creeping up the garden path with a revolver in his hand. I heard the shots, and saw the blood-stained hall and stairs, and the figures of the dead and dying. I saw my friend in her pink nightgown covered with her husband's blood. I saw my husband lying wounded on the bed. And I shall see it all as long as I live. I dreaded the thought of going back to that accursed country; for every stick and stone of it will be for ever hateful to me.

I had been in England about a fortnight, when I received a letter from the Authorities, saying that my presence would be required at a murder trial in Dublin that week, and that I ought to be ready to start at once on the receipt of a telegram, probably the following day, as the trial would be early in the week. The letter went on to say that I should be accommodated in a hotel in Dublin, which had been taken over by the Govern-

ment for witnesses, and that I should be well guarded. I wired back to say that I would go, but added that I was five miles from a station, and the motor could not go out because of the deep snow on the roads, and would they give me twenty-four hours' notice if possible? I also wrote and said that I would do all I possibly could to help them, but I utterly refused to stay at any hotel in Dublin. I had friends in the Castle and Royal Hospital, who I knew would put me up, and where I should feel a great deal safer than in a hotel. Besides which, I had stayed at the best hotel in Dublin, and I trembled to think what the worst would be like, and I did not think it likely that the Government would run to even the second best. I prepaid the reply to my telegram. All that day and the next I waited as patiently as I could for an answer. None came. I could not endure the waiting, so I wired again. Still no reply. Then I wrote, but that was no good. From the first I had volunteered to go back. I thought my evidence might be useful, and I was willing to go. I felt it was all I could do for the poor murdered men. I do not very often want to do disagreeable things: I generally spend my life in evading them. But this time I did want to do what I thought was right. The desire rapidly abated, as I waited day after day and week after week, without even an acknowledgment of my letter or wires. By now my husband had arrived from hospital, and he started to write. At last he received a vague letter to say the trials had been postponed, but they expected they would be held shortly. Why they had not had the courtesy to let me know this at once I do not know. Meanwhile I heard privately from Dublin that the man for whose trial I was going over had been released from prison, so I began to hope that I should not be required. Vain hope. We had gone on to stay with some other friends in the country, and were walking in the garden, when the intensely correct and pompous butler came out, and said in a most disapproving voice to my husband, "You are wanted by the H—— Police, sir." This proved to be a message from Scotland Yard, through the local police, to say that the trial would be held after all, and would we go over as soon as convenient?

Arrangements had been made for us to stay at the Chief Secretary's Lodge in Phœnix Park, and an escort would meet us at Kingstown, if we would kindly wire the date of our arrival. A letter confirming this arrived the same night. Apparently they had rearrested the prisoner, and decided to try him after all. Just a little touch of Irish humour, but rather hard on the prisoner and on me. By this time I had lost all wish to go. I was frightened of Ireland, and

I only wanted to try and forget.

However, we started, and I was comforted by the thought that at least I should be safe and comfortable in the Chief Secretary's Lodge. But I had forgotten the curious habits of Irish officials in Ireland, and that a letter or two is nothing to them. We arrived at Kingstown at the usual hour of 6 A.M. Other people were met by motors—the King's Messenger and several other officers drove off. We scorned all offers of help. Were we not important witnesses? Were we not going to stay at an official residence? Every moment I expected a large car and the promised escort to arrive. We waited over an hour. It was quite dark and very cold. At last we crawled into an open Ford car that had come to meet two policemen from Liverpool. They, being wise men, had apparently not arrived. We were tired, hungry, and very cross. About a mile out of Kingstown we met a motor, which stopped when they saw us. It was the promised car, escort and all, one hour and a half late. An officer handed us a letter. I tore it open. It simply said that the arrangements for accommodating us at the Chief Secretary's Lodge had fallen through, and that rooms had been taken for us at a hotel on the Quays. The writer hoped we might be "reasonably comfortable," and added, the hotel was well guarded, and there were sentries on the roof. I had often passed that hotel, and knew it well, for what it was, a pot-house; and twenty sentries on the roof would not make it any cleaner.

My temper used to be fairly good, but Ireland had ruined it. I do not like to think now what that escort must have thought of me. I decided at first to return to Kingstown, and to take the same boat back to England, but I felt there were such a lot of things I wanted to say first to several people in Dublin Castle. So we drove in gloomy silence to the Castle. I had firmly refused to set foot in that dreadful hotel. It was after eight o'clock by now, but the Castle inhabitants are not early risers. Poor things, they work most of the night. Ordinarily, I only feel pity and admiration for most of them, but that morning it added insult to injury to find no one up. No fire anywhere, no food, no one to swear at. I lighted a fire with my evidence, which I had written out so neatly. Eventually sleepy orderlies arrived, and I took refuge in the house of a General, who was a friend of ours. We had several friends, too, on his staff. They were very sympathetic, and quite horrified at the way I had been treated. After a bath and breakfast I felt warmer and happier. One or two police officials came to see me, but I refused to be soothed. To one I said, "Who was the idiot responsible for

there being no motor to meet us?" To which he replied nervously, "I was; as a matter of fact I looked up the boat in an old time-table. It used to arrive at eight o'clock, so I ordered the motor for that hour." This was too much for me, and I had to laugh. This was Ireland at its brightest and best. I was persuaded to stay and give my evidence, but the problem as to where we were to stay had not yet been solved. Every one, without exception, agreed the suggested hotel was quite out of the question for any woman. By this time I was too tired and bored to care much where I went. Some one eventually wired to the Chief Secretary, who was in London, to ask if he really had withdrawn his previous offer of his house. In an hour back came his answer. Of course we were to go there; we were expected. So it was "only" some one's mistake. A very unpleasant mistake for me. We drove to Phœnix Park just as it was getting dusk. The streets seemed fuller than ever. The usual groups of men at all the corners stared into the car as we passed. They looked even more sullen, more menacing, than formerly. Oh, it was horrible to be back again!

A cheerful black cat met us in the hall of the Chief Secretary's Lodge. It was a particularly vulgar-looking animal. There were at least four others like it, each more common than the last. But they were all so nice and friendly, so very pleased to see me. It was a good deal more than any one else had been that day. I loved them for it, and did my best to reward them at meal-times. The next day I found, to my dismay, that we were only wanted this time for the summary of evidence, and that I should have to go over again in about three weeks' time for the court-martial itself. In Ireland, of course, if they said three weeks, it probably meant six, and I felt that I should never be finished with this detestable business. I was also told that the police authorities would be very grateful if I would go round the Dublin prisons to see if I could identify one of the murderers among the men who had been arrested since 21st November. I gave my evidence at the summary, in front of the prisoner. There were only five or six people in the room, but I felt very nervous, and my heart thumped. What would the court-martial itself be like!

Going round the prisons the day after was another unforgettable episode. We started off as usual in a closed car, at a great pace, followed by more cars full of detectives, every man with his hand in his right-hand pocket. I realised now very well what that meant. I sat buried in a fur coat, another fur up to my eyes. I did not like it a bit. On arrival at the first prison an officer came out and took me up a sort of passage, telling me to keep very close to one

side, as the other side could be seen from the top windows of the prison. I simply flattened myself against the wall. I was put into a little hut. The windows were covered with felt, and in the felt slits about eighteen inches long and three inches high were cut. It was explained to me that I was to stand with my eyes at one of these slits, and the prisoners would be paraded in front of me in batches of ten. They would be numbered, and if I thought I recognised one of them I was to give the number to the officer at my side. I was told that there was no cause for alarm, as the prisoners could only see my eyes, and could not possibly know me again. There were about twenty other people in the hut — soldiers, detectives, one or two other women, and a little boy of eight, whose father had been murdered before his eyes, and who had said "he thought he could recognise the man who killed daddy." I felt almost too sick to look at the first batch of prisoners who arrived. Never have I seen such an unpleasant sight. They all seemed absolutely terror-stricken; they were shaking and gibbering with fright. They were not there to be shot, they were only there to be looked at, and yet they looked, I imagine, as a coward would look when facing a firing party. One or two nervously sucked cigarettes. I do not know why they were allowed to smoke at all. As each batch went away unrecognised by any one, some of them sang in a quavering voice a sort of song of triumph —or possibly relief. This noise was stupid and irritating. It was the most extraordinary feeling to meet all those pairs of eyes. The prisoners had to look straight in front of them at the hut, and they stood there, licking their pallid lips, with quivering faces and shaking hands. They presented a sight not easily to be forgotten, and which, I hope, not many other women will have to see. Surely they must have been guilty of some crime, or they could not have looked as they did. No one identified any one, and the procession of cars moved on to another prison. Here there was the same sort of hut, and again I stood with my eyes glued to a slit in the wall. I think I nearly fainted once. The atmosphere of the hut was very close, and I could not bear to look at all those men. I saw about two hundred altogether, and the strain was terrible. I knew that some of them must have the blood of my friends on their hands. Some of them looked capable of any crime. But, unlike the first prison, where I had seen only the scum of Dublin, I saw a few fine-looking men here. One in particular had a wonderful face. He looked straight at the hut, but through it and beyond it. He stood with his head up, without a trace of fear. It was the face of a visionary.

I wondered what crime he had committed, why he was there. Whatever he had done he was not ashamed of it. But then, alas! no Sinn Feiner is ashamed of murder. Again I recognised no one, but one prisoner was identified by a man in the hut. It must have been a nasty moment for him when his number and name were taken and he was led away. At last the long ordeal came to an end. So exhausted that I could hardly stand, I was conducted out of the prison, and we motored rapidly home, followed by some eight or nine detectives in Ford cars. The worst of it was, that the Sinn Feiners were also nearly always clean-shaven men, and also went about in Fords, and I never knew whether I was being guarded or hunted. I left for England that night. How I wished I had not got to return. Every one promised, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards, to get the court-martial through as soon as possible. I knew there would be no rest or peace for me while it was hanging over my head, a shadow on my life.

The journey back was much more successfully arranged. They seemed anxious to make amends for our arrival—the arrangements, or rather lack of arrangements for which had certainly not inspired me with confidence. Perhaps it would be wiser not to mention all the precautions that were taken. I never knew whether to laugh or to cry, some of them were so very funny. The name selected for me to travel under was so original; the Intelligence officer who had thought of it was so obviously proud of his choice, and I tried hard to remember to answer when addressed by it.

But it was too much for my gravity when the procession of armoured cars, &c., pulled up at Kingstown pier, and a portly detective put his head inside my motor and said, "And what name are you travelling under to-night?" What was it? It began with T., and that was all I could remember.

I could not take things seriously, or think that I really was in danger; but then I remembered 21st November, and knew all things are possible in Ireland.

CHAPTER X.—THE COURT-MARTIAL.

If I had married a crowned head or a Cabinet Minister, I should doubtless, long ere this, have become accustomed to the presence of detectives, both inside and outside the house. As it was, the sight of one or two of these unmistakable-looking men, walking solemnly up and down the extremely respectable and old-fashioned street in London, where we waited our next summons to Ireland, was almost too much

for my nerves, and sometimes for my gravity. I was alternately frightened and amused. Somehow the big, quiet old house in which we were staying seemed centuries removed from the turmoil and horrors of present-day life in Ireland. It seemed utterly impossible that the Sinn Feiners could interfere with us here. If they did, I could imagine the butler opening the door and saying, "Not at home" in his most impressive manner, and I felt that even the most militant Sinn Feiner would retire abashed before that magisterial demeanour. Also, of course, were my husband a royal personage or a Minister, there would be a slight compensation in the way of emoluments. As it is, we have not even yet recovered, three months afterwards, expenses of our first trip to Ireland on Government service. Truly the wheels of H.M. Paymasters grind slowly. They also grind exceeding small, and instead of being at all grateful to me for going over, I do not doubt that they will erase from my claim for expenses the cost of my sleeping berth and the food I consumed on the journey, and any other item which appears to them unnecessary for a mere witness. Wherever I went in London, I was always asked my views on the Irish situation. I had not any to give. The situation is too complex for any one of ordinary intelligence. The only solution I can see is one of money. Cut off their trade, touch their pockets. At present Ireland is waging war and making money at one and the same time. I know I am prejudiced: how could I be otherwise? I am not used to murder, and near at hand it was bound to make far more impression on one than a thousand tales of German atrocities. I waited in England a month, a week over the promised time. At last, in despair, I went to the Irish Office, to see if they could find out there whether the court-martial, at which I was the principal witness, had been again postponed. I rang the bell, and the door was opened about an inch. On explaining who I was, I was allowed to enter. Two obvious detectives sat in the hall. Each one had his hand in his right-hand coat pocket. I looked at them, and laughed outright. That particular attitude was so very familiar. The big service revolvers are usually kept there; the small automatic pistol in the left-hand breast-pocket. There was very little I did not know about revolvers. The worst of it is now, that whenever I see a man put his hand into his pocket, I always suspect a revolver, and cannot help giving an audible sigh of relief when he brings out a pipe, or some such innocent article. I remember the murderer I saw in the garden on 21st November, and I can see him now, scrambling over the wall; then, a moment later, he dropped into the garden, brought his hand out of his pocket, and with it

a large revolver. With this in his hand, he crept towards the house. Hatefully familiar attitude!

The Irish Office were sympathetic and helpful, and a date was fixed for the trial about a week later. As the time approached, I got more and more nervous. When I had first volunteered to give evidence, I had never imagined that the whole thing would not have been over in a month at most, and that one journey to Ireland would not have been sufficient. Now it was three months since the murders, and this was my second visit. I do not wonder that my nerves were on edge. The arrangements for this visit were also a little patchy. At one moment I was surrounded by a perfect army of detectives, officers, and military police. At others I was left severely alone. The procession from the train to the boat at Holyhead, at the charming hour of 2 A.M., must have been a funny sight. No Customs examination now, but a special gangway. We moved at a sharp trot, followed by the two inevitable soldiers' dogs, and precipitated ourselves on board. I was put into a cabin, and the escort piled themselves on the berths the other side of the passage, where they lay in serried rows throughout the remainder of the night. Once when I wanted some coffee, I put my head outside the door; but the moment I did so, I caused such a commotion among the ranks opposite, that I hastily withdrew it. Thank Heaven, it was a calm crossing. This time the arrangements for meeting me were complete. At dawn and, once more, at a brisk pace, we hurried down the pier, and were distributed among the various waiting motor-cars. The one I was in was covered with wire-netting, and had other methods of defence, that perhaps I had better not describe. Anyway, it was singularly uncomfortable. It was decided that this time I was to stay in Dublin Castle. It was thought I should be safer and better there than at the Chief Secretary's Lodge in Phœnix Park. The Castle is a dreadful place, surrounded by the worst slums in Dublin. Nowadays it is like a huge rabbit-warren. Every official connected in any way, however remotely, with the Government of Ireland or the police, is interned there, in many cases with their wives and families. In addition, innumerable military officers with their belongings, a very large number of soldiers and police. There are also scores of male and female clerks, typists, &c. Accommodation is at a premium. Quite important people sleep two in a room—nay, two in a bed, sometimes. All day long motors dash in and out, orderlies scurry about with papers. About tea-time, lady clerks, jug in hand, wander out in search of milk, and exchange a few words of badinage with the waiting orderlies. I had nothing whatever to do, and after walking round and round

the square for an hour or so, the only form of exercise to be got, I spent the remainder of the day at the window, watching the stream of motors and passers-by on the square. It is the gloomiest and most dreary place I have ever been in, and the only conversation ever heard is on the state of Ireland, and the latest rumours. I watched two intrepid warriors returning from golf. Two golf-bags were handed out of the car, and then four enormous revolvers. One official who used to sally forth, with a large escort, to lunch at his club, was asked by the other members to stay away. They considered his presence a danger. Even the poor little children of some of the police officials never leave the Castle. Afternoon dances are held occasionally, at which the inhabitants stretch their cramped legs. It is the only exercise that some of them get. Personally it makes one ashamed to think that the Government of the most powerful Empire in the world should allow its servants to live like this, practically as prisoners in the heart of Dublin. After doing nothing for a couple of days, the prosecuting counsel, for whom we had been waiting, arrived from England, and I was told the trial would be the next day. I had never been present at even a County Court before, and I felt as if I had committed murder myself, and when I heard the well-known names of the leading English counsel, I was more nervous than ever. The next morning I waited about an hour outside the court-room, where the court-martial officer sought to cheer me by showing me on the walls of the City Hall opposite the marks made by the rebel bullets in 1916, and the spot where the first policeman was killed. It was while waiting here that I heard a leading Dublin doctor say that he could stop the whole of the present trouble in half an hour. His idea was "to hang Asquith and two of his secretaries from the bridge in the centre of the town." This seemed to me a little drastic, but of course life is very cheap in Ireland, and the loyalists do not appear to like Asquith. At last my turn came, and I was led into the presence of the Court, and gave my evidence. I was not very severely cross-examined, and the ordeal was not so bad as I had feared. It was quite easy to tell my story after all; every detail of that day is written on my heart and brain for ever.

The defending counsel sought to imply that probably, with my husband lying badly wounded, I had been nervous —too nervous, perhaps, to be quite clear as to what had really happened. But he was wrong. For one thing, I did not at first realise how badly injured my husband was, neither did I know, at first, that two other officers were dead, and two others dying, in the house. But even had I known all this, I do not think it would have

made any difference. My brain was never clearer, and I never felt less nervous than I did on that morning. The Court was a most impressive sight. It was crowded with officers, and the counsel and judge-advocate in wig and gown were a strange contrast to the khaki. English and Irish law appear to be different, and there were various arguments on legal points. There was also one amusing episode. One witness, called for the defence, said he had known the prisoner for years, and could testify as to his character. Counsel, wishing to emphasise the value of this witness's evidence, said, "You were a Loyalist member of the Dublin County Council, and opposed the Sinn Fein member at the last election, I think." To which the witness quickly and emphatically answered, "No, not a Loyalist, a Nationalist, sir." Not precisely the answer required. At last the Court was closed, and, later, I heard that the prisoner had been found guilty on the lesser charge, and sentence would be promulgated later. At last I was free to leave Ireland for ever. But I was not to go yet without one more further shock. I sent a messenger with a telegram to the post office, a few hundred yards from the Castle. While waiting for his return, I heard that three unarmed messengers had been murdered, almost in view of the Castle gates, and I felt certain that he was one of them. It was the usual story, so common now in Ireland. A crowded street at midday, a volley of revolver shots from the usual group of loafers, not a hand raised to hinder, not a voice raised in protest; and, as usual, the assassins escaped down a side street. It was imagined that these poor men were shot "by mistake" for three others, who arrived in the street a few minutes later. Doubtless these three left mothers, widows, and children, but one never hears of these. That their men were shot "by mistake" will not be much consolation to them.

My journey back was a little uneven. Two officers were deputed to take me to London, and they duly arrived with several motors. Followed by an armoured car with machine-guns, we left for Kingstown. I could not help contrasting this with my departure from Germany, where I left with many smiles and "aufwiedersehens," carrying a large bunch of pink carnations.

As far as Holyhead all went well, but there the officials had not been told that I was coming, and no carriage had been reserved for me or my escort. I was put into a carriage marked "Ladies only," and my escort left on the platform. I felt distinctly annoyed, as I compared this to my departure from Holyhead a few nights before, which had been most impressive; and I said bitterly to the detective, who had been hastily summoned by an officer, that, possibly now I had given my evidence,

my life was of no further value to the authorities, but that it was still just as valuable to me, and that, a label "Ladies only" did not seem a very adequate protection. Eventually I travelled with my escort in a reserved carriage. One of them unnerved me very much by placing his revolver on the seat beside him, where it was pointing straight at me. He then went to sleep, and having heard terrifying stories of how automatics went off, almost if you looked at them, I passed an anxious hour, wondering what the effect of a jolt or fall would be on the evil-looking weapon. But nothing happened. The journey seemed endless, but at last we arrived in London.

I am finishing this in a lovely little spot in the south of France. Somebody else is also here, also writing his memoirs. No less a person than Monsieur Venizelos. Seeking for a quiet place to write this morning, I blundered into a little room reserved for him. He spluttered with indignation, and I fled. After all, I think I shall go and play golf. Perhaps Arnaud Massey, the French champion, will give me a lesson again. "Keep your eye on the ball. Do not look up. No one is going to shoot at you from behind a hedge here. You are not in Ireland"—thank God!

THE VOYAGE HOME.

BY ALAN GRAHAM.

CHAPTER XV.

THE passengers saw little of each other and nothing of Sir Evan Pilth until that evening at dinner. The ornament of the Law Courts, after his interview with Captain Spedley—an interview the result of which was unknown to every one except the two participants—had retired to the seclusion of his cabin to resume the dignity which, in the excitement of his loss, he had discarded. Lady Pilth had been invisible since the discovery. There was nothing, in fact, with which the Honourable Stephen Corris could stay his hunger for gossip. He was reduced at last to recognising the existence of Murray and his friend Scrymgeour; but he got little satisfaction from their society, as they listened to his garbled facts and unfounded insinuations unmoved, and gave him nothing in return. In his extremity he descended so low as the steward's pantry, where much vague rumour floated in the air, but nothing substantial enough to satisfy his craving. Dinner, however, brought him a certain relief, for, if it solved no problems, it at least gave food for his imagination to digest.

Honiton, too, was restless. After he had left Charlie Conliffe to pursue his researches in solitude, he roamed the decks with a gloom and restlessness unusual to him. He did not look for his cabin-mate and jailer until the need of fresh clothes for dinner drove him below. He found the detective smoking heavily in the cabin. Neither spoke as Honiton entered. They had not met since the announcement of the Pilths' loss, and each seemed more than willing to leave the first word to the other. Honiton busied himself changing into more reputable clothes than those in which he lounged on deck, whistling meanwhile as men do to cloak a lack of mental comfort. Peter Brown continued to smoke stolidly, ruminating on the madness of the bargain he had made with this man. At one moment he was full of a dull anger against Honiton for landing him in such a false position, at the next he was bitter with contempt at his own foolishness in not foreseeing some at least of the complications that were certain to arise from such a compact.

Of the two, Honiton was the

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less fitted to maintain this strained silence. His naturally genial temperament gradually asserted itself, and notwithstanding that he anticipated something in the nature of an accusation, he was the first to speak.

"Well, Brown, what about it?" he began abruptly, turning from the fixing of a collar-stud, with the ghost of a smile hesitating on his lips. "Am I to be arrested on a new charge?"

The detective slowly took his pipe from his mouth and shook his head.

"I don't believe you had any hand in it," he said. "You wouldn't be such a damned fool."

"That's a very sensible argument, old friend—very sensible, if none too flattering. I notice you don't base your belief in my innocence on my high moral character?" he added, with a bitter smile.

"I'm afraid not. Suspicion would naturally rest on you, and if it were known who you are——"

"Then in the face of this you mean to stick to our bargain?" cried Honiton eagerly.

"A bargain is a bargain. You fulfilled your part—at Valetta."

"Brown, you're a sportsman. You're more than a sportsman—you're the best and kindest fellow I ever met."

In his relief and gratitude Honiton made to seize the other's hand, but Brown shook him off brusquely.

"I'm not," he retorted harshly. "I'm the biggest fool known to God. He only knows how I came to be mad enough to make such a bargain. Even a congenital idiot might have guessed something of the troubles ahead."

Honiton was taken aback at his vehemence. He pressed his freckled hand on one of Peter's hunched shoulders, and shook him in a friendly manner.

"Don't let the business get on your nerves, old friend," he said in a kindly tone. "It's no worse now than when we started, if you don't believe I stole the diamonds."

"No worse!" exclaimed the detective, and then suddenly realised that he could not say in what fashion it was worse. He could not explain that the necessary silence had begun to interfere with his own personal happiness.

"It grows worse every day," he went on, changing the words that were on his lips. "I see you—you a crimi—you, I should say, under grave suspicion of a serious offence, on the most friendly terms with decent people—Miss Upton, for example,—and I dare not whisper a word of warning. It's wrong—it's all wrong, Honiton."

"I told you before you made the bargain that I had friends sailing by the *Bedouin*," replied Honiton. "In fact, that was my main reason for wishing to travel—shall we say—incognito? You can't say I let you down over that."

It could not be denied, yet

it only added to Peter Brown's irritation. He had had the data before him from which an imaginative man like himself ought to have deduced something of the difficulties ahead, yet he had allowed himself to be overwhelmed by what he now recognised as pure sentiment.

He sighed and shrugged his shoulders, and before the matter could be discussed further, the gong sounded for dinner.

It might be expected that Charlie Conliffe, after his premature attack on the bottle, would be unfitted to put in an appearance at the table, but he possessed remarkable recuperative powers, and after a couple of hours' heavy sleep, he awoke comparatively sober. He opened his eyes to see his wife moving about the cabin, putting the last touches to a change of dress. She had put on a clinging gown of dove-grey, with a white vest and a very high neckband that would hide her outraged throat from the eyes of the curious.

Charlie watched her furtively, and a frown deepened on his brow as he recalled the incident of his last conscious moments. His wife's bosom and neck were not yet concealed, and the marks of his fingers—already turned a dull purple—hastened his recollection.

Charlie was no worse than any other dissipated weakling, and even the abnormal soaking in alcohol that his conscience had undergone had not rotted it away entirely. He recognised in a crude fashion that he had been a brute, and felt that he owed his wife amends. He watched her until she had completed her toilet, and, misreading the calmness of her face, judged that a little easy kindness would win her forgiveness.

He cleared his throat once or twice to accustom himself to the sound of his own voice, and then began abruptly—

"I say, old girl, I'm afraid I got two or three shades off tint this afternoon. Made rather a beast of myself, didn't I?"

"Yes, Charlie, you did," said Joan, in a voice that possessed a kind of unearthly placidity.

He felt the unnaturalness of it vaguely, and it made him indefinitely uncomfortable, but not sufficiently so to soften the crudity of his attempt at making amends.

"I'm sorry, old dear," he said, with an attempt at offhandedness, as though such a small matter as strangling one's wife needed only a passing reference. "You know I'm apt to get a bit excited when I've had a few good 'uns. Let's make it up and—and forget it."

He had risen from the settee, and as he spoke he approached his wife with the intention of sealing his assumed forgiveness with a kiss. She divined his purpose, and with a gasp of astonishment, started back, holding him off with outstretched hands. Horror started to her eyes, and her

lips parted as if to scream for assistance.

"Sorry, old thing," said Charlie, shrinking back dismayed; "I only meant to be matey."

"How dare you!" exclaimed his wife, her bosom heaving desperately. "How dare you! This is a worse insult than the last."

She paused as though to recover control of herself, and then went on, more calmly—

"You've done everything that a man could do to his wife. You left me for a street-woman; you charged me with being unfaithful to you; you would have killed me but for help coming in time; and now you think you can pass it all off with a friendly word! What a poor back-boneless wretch you must think I am! There are some things that a woman can't forgive, and you have been guilty of three of them."

"I'm beastly sorry, my dear," replied Charlie, with a whine like that of a conciliatory cur. "There's no harm in me really. It's only the drink. When I get a few aboard——"

"You're beyond help. I give you up. When we get to England I must leave you. I meant to try again, but you've shown me—now—how impossible it is."

"I swear I'll never lay a hand on you in anger again," cried her husband.

Joan laughed hysterically.

"I think it is hopeless to explain," she said, controlling herself with difficulty. "You are too—coarse—to understand. I never saw you as you are until now. I had forgiven you for trying to kill me—I knew you weren't responsible—but I can't forgive this."

Charlie was beyond his depth—and looked it. His finer feelings, rudimentary in the first instance, and blunted by continual indulgence, were incapable of appreciating his wife's point of view. That she could forgive his murderous attack upon her, yet find something new and incomprehensible to make a scene about when he was so amiable and conciliating, was out of the range of his capacity.

"All right, old thing. Have it your own way," he said, humbly enough. "I know I'm a bit of a beast when I'm mellow, but don't be hard on me. I'm not a bad chap at heart. You—you won't rub it in in front of people, will you?"

"It's bad enough to know what you are myself without having the other passengers pitying me behind my back," she answered bitterly. "You can count on me not to give you away."

"And that fellow Brown"—Charlie suggested uncomfortably. He hated to think of that side of the subject, remembering something of his drunken accusations.

"You need not be afraid of him gossiping about us," replied his wife. "He is not that sort of man. He is a

gentleman. Now let us go in to dinner, and try for once to keep sober."

"You're a good sort, Joan," he answered in a relieved tone. "I won't have more than a couple of short ones. And look here, old girl, when we get home I'll buy you——"

"When we get home I'm done with you," interrupted his wife, turning upon him with a look in her eyes that warned him against any further attempt at conciliation. "The gong has gone. You had better come straight into the saloon. You know what will happen if you go to the smoke-room now."

Charlie, in his new-born penitence, followed his wife like a lamb, thereby occasioning what almost amounted to surprise in Scrymgeour and Murray, who were holding back to include him in their usual round of drinks before dinner.

"He's verra late the nicht," declared Murray, when the gong had reverberated through the passages and a further five minutes had passed.

"He is that," agreed Scrymgeour. "A doot he maun be fou a'ready."

"A'm gye dry," said his friend. "A dinna think we'll wait ony longer. What d'ye think aboot it?"

"Weel, juist a wee nip, Murray. He'll maybe turn up the noo."

"Maybe," agreed Murray, giving his order to the waiting steward. "But he's a puir crittur aifter a'. What d'ye think o' this stramash aboot the puir body's braws?"

"Hoots! It's juist havers," said Scrymgeour contemptuously. "Conliffe micht rest easy in his mind. He hasna the guts tae dae a thing like that. Wull ye ha'e anither?"

"It'll dae nae hairm," agreed Murray, and thus contemptuously did these shrewd observers dismiss the case against Charlie Conliffe, and, gulping appreciatively their "nips," follow the others to the saloon.

The Honourable Stephen Corris was delighted to see both Sir Evan and Lady Pilth appear at table. He had feared that they might prefer to mourn their loss in the privacy of their cabin and cheat him of a gratuitous entertainment.

Sir Evan was himself surprised that his wife should care to make a public appearance in the face of his own expressed wish.

"It is my considered opinion, my dear," he had told her—"it is my considered opinion that the enormity of our loss desiderates on your part a dignified seclusion. Although it is necessary that I appear, in order that I may state my position clearly in the presence of our fellow-passengers, your abstention from the public table will fittingly express your grief at your loss, and will at the same time save you from the possibility of insult."

"All the same, Evan, dear, I think I'd like to be there. I want to hear what you say."

Sir Evan was astonished that

his wife should even mildly oppose his wishes. For many years she had been content to act upon his merest suggestion, and to echo his lightest word.

"You may rest assured that I shall express myself with clarity and — ah — absence of ambiguity, and that I shall return to you with an accurate report of my statement, the gist of which you are already sufficiently familiar with."

"All the same, I think I'll go," repeated Lady Pilth, with unprecedented obstinacy.

"My dear Mary, surely there is some misunderstanding," replied her husband, quite thrown off his balance by the unexpectedness of the opposition. "My wish is that you absent yourself from this function. I cannot have made myself sufficiently clear, yet I flatter myself that obscurity of phraseology is not one of my failings."

"I quite understand, dear," said Lady Pilth placidly. "But all the same, I think I'll go. I should like to hear what you say for myself."

"But—but——"

"It's no use arguing about it, Evan. I intend to go."

When one has been accustomed for twenty or thirty years to have one's every suggestion carried out without comment, it is something of a staggerer to meet with such determined opposition. Having never found the necessity for them, one is without the weapons of coercion. So at least Sir Evan found it. He stood stupidly, with dropped jaw, looking at his insubordinate wife with an expression of ludicrous dismay.

His dignity, however, must be preserved at all costs. Incapable—for lack of ideas—of resisting her determination, he had at least sufficient presence of mind to acquiesce gracefully.

"It shall be as you wish, my dear," he declared, with the air of one granting a favour. "I can quite understand and appreciate your desire to be an auditor of my—ah—address, and although the circumstances are such that I should personally prefer your absence, far be it from me to oppose your expressed aspiration."

The vibration of the gong beat upon the cabin door as he concluded.

"Come, then, dear," said Lady Pilth. "Take me in to dinner."

CHAPTER XVI.

Captain Spedley and his first officer, Mr Goneram, were punctilious timekeepers, and took their places at the head of their respective tables to the minute. The Honourable Stephen Corris was on this occasion no less punctual. He did not wish to miss a word or a glance that might help to feed his famished curiosity.

Mr and Mrs Balke took their

seats with an air of subdued gloom that suggested a death in the family, and, indeed, their disinterested sorrow could not have been greater, but would probably have been less, had such been the case.

Corris had a full view of the entrance to the saloon door, and his small inquisitive eyes twinkled as Sir Evan and Lady Pilth appeared at the same moment as Mr and Mrs Conliffe. The couples could not enter simultaneously, and Corris was curious to see which would give way to the other. Charlie Conliffe would certainly not have hung back had his wife not restrained him by a hand upon his arm. Sir Evan and Lady Pilth swept forward, and as they passed the Conliffes, Lady Pilth turned upon the unfortunate Charlie such a look of vindictive hate as one would not have credited her placid face with being capable of. Not only so, but when seated at their respective tables—at which they were so placed as to be within full view of each other—she continued to cast similar glances at him throughout the meal.

All the other diners were reasonably punctual, with the exception of Murray and Scrymgeour, who, as already related, were acquiring vigour for the coming meal in another place. Sir Evan Pilth eyed their empty seats with impatience. He was unusually silent, and his nervous movements with napkin and cutlery were not in keeping with his customary pompous self-possession. There was, indeed, an unusual strained silence at both tables, as though every one was conscious of thunder in the air.

A look of relief and satisfaction crossed Sir Evan's face as the two Scotchmen entered and walked to their places with such an air of overdone unconcern that one could not but picture them wiping their mouths. He waited until they were seated, and then rose to his feet in the professional manner he had cultivated when striving to catch the Speaker's eye.

"Captain Spedley, ladies and gentlemen," he began in the resonant voice to which, more than to any quality of intellect, he owed his success in life, "I feel it incumbent upon me to make a clear statement of my position with regard to the dastardly outrage that has been perpetrated upon my poor wife and myself."

Captain Spedley was taken aback. He looked up quickly, and seemed upon the point of rising to protest, then thought better of it, and fixed his eyes on the table before him. Of the others, all gave their eyes to the orator, with the exception of Charlie Conliffe, who only lent them occasionally in a quick furtive glance, and returned them to the table.

"In the first place, I desire to make it perfectly clear," went on Sir Evan, "that I withdraw, absolutely, any personal accusation which I may have permitted myself to make in the excusable state of agita-

tion into which I was thrown by the lamentable discovery of Lady Pilth's loss. However strongly facts may point in one direction, my knowledge of legal matters—which, I may say without egotism, is admittedly unrivalled—warns me of the danger of such an accusation, and I am content to retreat to the absolutely sound position that some individual on board the vessel is guilty of this theft, and that it is essential that that individual be discovered and the jewels restored."

"Hear, hear!" ejaculated Mr Cohun Balke, thoroughly in agreement with such a sentiment.

"That is my first point," continued the orator. "And it is one that I am anxious you should all bear in mind with the utmost clarity, in view of the possibility of your being called upon to witness to my statement in a court of law.

"We come now, ladies and gentlemen, to the equally important question of the means to be adopted for the attainment of the two objects which I have stated to be essential—namely, the discovery of the criminal and the recovery of the jewels. It is with the utmost regret that I have to announce that Captain Spedley refuses to sanction the perfectly simple and obvious method that I have placed before him, and that he has up to the present moment made no counter-suggestion to meet the undeniable urgency of the situation. In view of his lamentable lack of initiative, I am compelled to take this public means of rousing him to a realisation of the responsibilities of his position. I am thoroughly alive to the fact that a ship's captain possesses powers which verge upon autocracy, and——"

But Captain Spedley had had as much of this as he could stand.

"You'll excuse me, Sir Evan," he interrupted from his seat. "A ship's captain knows all about his responsibilities. He's got to, or he wouldn't long be a ship's captain. If you'll kindly sit down and get on with your dinner—your soup's getting cold—I'll tell you what I mean to do."

The Honourable Stephen Corris giggled. He had not enjoyed himself so heartily since he left England to avoid his creditors. Sir Evan Pilth resented the interruption, and seemed on the point of saying so, when, with unprecedented initiative, his wife pulled him to his seat by his coat-tails. He was so overwhelmed by the novelty and the indignity of the proceeding that he was quite thrown off his balance, and by the time he had recovered it, the skipper had got well into the swing of his remarks.

"In the first place," Captain Spedley went on, "I'm not going to be bullied into anything. I did my very best to get you to put your jewels in the strong-room, Sir Evan, and you wouldn't. The whole

thing's your own fault entirely. As for searching all the passengers and crew—it's a farce, besides being an insult. I won't do it. What I've decided to do is this. I'm going to put the affair in the hands of the Liverpool police, and nobody shall leave the ship until they have taken charge. Things will then be in exactly the same state as they are now, and the responsibility will lie with the police and not with me."

"I protest, sir, I protest with the utmost vehemence against the pusillanimity of your measures," exclaimed Sir Evan. "Apart altogether from their dilatoriness, you have to take into consideration the possibility—nay, the probability—that the thief will find means to dispose of his ill-gotten gains at our next place of call—Gibraltar."

"I'll take care he doesn't," retorted the captain. "We only call at Gib for mails. Nobody shall leave the ship, and nothing shall go ashore without being thoroughly overhauled by myself. The only thing you'll have to take on trust is me, and Mr Goneram there will keep his weather-eye on me. For that matter, I'll let you look through everything that goes ashore yourself rather than have you dissatisfied. Further than that I don't mean to go."

Captain Spedley's jaws closed upon the last words with a determination that was patent to every one in the saloon.

Sir Evan rose to his feet once more.

"I call you to witness, ladies and gentlemen," he said, with a cultivated wave of his hand, "my utter dissatisfaction with the adequacy of Captain Spedley's measures. Many days must elapse before the first steps are taken towards the elucidation of the mystery with which we are confronted, and——"

"It's no use going on, Sir Evan," the captain interrupted. "I've told you what I'm going to do, and there's an end of it. You said yourself a ship's captain's a bit of an autocrat, and I'm not going to have my dinner-table turned into a debating society. You'd better get on with your dinner."

As a personification of outraged dignity, Sir Evan Pilth at that moment would be hard to equal. What it was that he opened his mouth to say remains a mystery, for it never passed his lips. He—and with the whole complement of diners—was overwhelmed by a fresh sensation from a wholly unexpected quarter.

"You'd better sit down, dear," said his wife, and had recourse to her previous drastic method of emphasising her words. "I have something to say myself."

Sir Evan found himself in his seat utterly prostrated with astonishment. He would have been physically incapable of rising to protest further, even had his mind urged him to that course. At the moment,

however, he had no mind—he was mentally stunned. His wife could not have wrought more havoc upon him had she hit him on the head with a hammer, or become an advocate of women's rights.

Lady Pilth, meantime, had risen to her feet.

"I don't care what Captain Spedley says. I *will* say what I have to say," she began, looking defiantly at the captain, whose face wore a look of intense annoyance. "Sir Evan is quite right. It's a shame that something isn't done. But I don't agree with my husband withdrawing anything he said before. He was quite right, and he should have the courage to stick to it. It isn't necessary to search everybody — *one* would be quite enough, and if my diamonds are not found on him he should be locked up until they *are* found."

Lady Pilth was determined that there should be no doubt as to whom she would have searched and locked up. As she spoke, she pointed her accusing finger openly at Charlie Conliffe, and looked towards Captain Spedley as if inviting him to conduct the search personally on the spot.

Now Charlie Conliffe, though wonderfully sobered by his two hours' sleep, had not got rid of the dregs of his intoxication, and the whisky which he had ordered from the steward when he sat down to dinner not only had its own stimulating effect, but also roused all the backwash of his previous bout.

"It's a damn lie," he shouted, starting to his feet excitedly. "I won't——"

"Sit down, Charlie," ordered his wife, pulling him back with a firm hand upon his arm.

Her face was colourless as the neckband that hid her bruised throat, and no emotion appeared on her face or in her toneless voice. Peter Brown, watching her in deep sympathy and discomfort, realised the effort by which she retained her self-control.

"Captain Spedley," she said, raising her voice to be heard at the other table, "I appeal to you to stop this attack on my husband. Surely no one has a right to make accusations like this without proof."

"As I said before, I disclaim all——" began Sir Evan Pilth, only to be cut short by the captain's fist hammering the table before him.

"I've had enough of this," he shouted in the voice he used on the bridge when things did not go as he wished. "Drop it, all of you. It's for me to say what's to be done and what isn't."

He glared at Sir Evan and Lady Pilth. A dead silence fell upon the saloon, broken only by the subdued clatter of china and cutlery. All eyes were on the food before them, when, in the silence, Lady Pilth's voice sounded once more, like a last flicker of fire in a room after the lights have been turned off.

"All the same," it said obstinately, "he ought to be locked up."

It was the silent Mr Goneram who started it. No doubt the strain of the unusual meal was responsible, but whatever the initial cause, he suddenly spluttered and then burst into a roar of laughter. The ludicrous stubbornness of Lady Pilth appealed to some hidden sense of humour in the man, and he went off like a rocket. One by one the passengers followed his example, until all but the Conliffes and the Pilths were under the sway of a semi-hysterical laughter. Even Peter Brown could not resist it, though he was the first to recover.

Gradually the spontaneous merriment died down, to be replaced by a strained and shamefaced silence. Mr Goneram was easily the most embarrassed of the party. A self-contained man, unused to meeting people in bulk, he had been shocked out of his reserve by the sudden and unexpected absurdity of Lady Pilth, and now his ears burned with mortification at the enormity of his behaviour. During the remainder of the meal, the crown of his head was all that was visible to the passengers over whom he presided. He did not dare to raise his eyes from his plate.

An even more embarrassed member of the party, however, was Charlie Conliffe. He could not look up without finding the eyes of Lady Pilth fixed upon him accusingly. He did his utmost to ignore them—to forget them—but their fascination was too strong for him, and his own were drawn irresistibly back to read again the implacable hatred that was plain in them.

He could not have borne it of his own strength, so had to fortify himself from without with double whiskies, three of which he put away in the course of dinner, and even then the accusing eyes were as much as he could bear.

The meal dragged on miserably for all but the Honourable Stephen Corris, who attacked his food with a doubled gusto, spiced as it was by the stupid little scene that had been enacted for his delectation. He was the only member of the party who made any effort at conversation, and his attempts to drag the Cohun Balkes, Captain Spedley — even Sir Evan Pilth—into a general talk met with nothing more encouraging than frozen monosyllables.

At Mr Goneram's table it was even worse. He himself was sunk beneath the load of his own shame. Jocelyn Upton and her mother retired within their strong English shells of reserve. Murray and Scrymgeour remained, as usual, hidden away in their still stronger Scottish ones. Honiton, whom one might have counted upon to infuse a little life into the party, was content to eat his dinner in silence, and keep an inscrutable face, while Peter

Brown was too full of pity for Joan Conliffe to notice, much less to break, the general silence.

Even whisky did not serve to support Charlie to the end against the impeachment in Lady Pilth's compelling eyes. There came a moment when he could stand it no longer. The constant accusation was wearing him down. He staggered to his feet and, with a thick semi-articulate mutter, lurched off down the saloon, looking everywhere but in the direction of his enemy. Yet in the doorway he could not resist the fascination of a last glance, only to find that the vindictive eyes were following him, were drilling holes through him with the fury of their hatred. With a cry of horror, Charlie bolted up the companion for the sanctuary of the deck smoking-room. There at least he was safe, and not only safe, but in a position to administer first-aid to himself. He sat down to an evening of serious drinking, and the more deeply he drank, the less assured did he become of his own innocence.

The dinner petered out. There was no lingering over coffee, but rather a general tendency to fly apart—to get clean away from the embarrassment of one another's company. It is safe to say, however, that, apart from the Pilths, no one was inclined to take the matter of Charlie Conliffe's guilt seriously, with the exception of Charlie himself.

CHAPTER XVII.

The two days that followed were remarkable more for the growth of ideas and relationships than for wealth of incident. The weather was calm and mild, and but for the theft and the uncertainty to which it had given rise, the trip from Malta to Gibraltar would have been exceedingly pleasant. There were few amongst the passengers, however, who were unaffected by the robbery in one way or another. Murray and Scrymgeour followed their usual course unmoved, but even they were indirectly affected through Charlie Conliffe, who spent much of his time in the smoking-room with them.

The Honourable Stephen Corris would frequently join them. Anxious to gossip over the possibilities of the case, he found few amongst his fellow-passengers willing to reciprocate, and it was sheer lack of an audience that drove him to the smoking-room in the first instance. Once there, however, he found in Charlie Conliffe a never-failing source of excitement. The unfortunate suspect became more and more uncertain of his own innocence. At every meal the accusing eyes of Lady Pilth drove him

into a fresh desperation, and after each ordeal he had recourse again to the only remedy he knew.

He could talk of nothing else, and Corris would sit for hours, fascinated, while Charlie, in an ever-increasing state of drunkenness, rambled disconnectedly over the pros and cons of the affair. At one moment he would be loud in assertion of his innocence, at the next he might be picturing vividly just how he could have accomplished the theft. It was the uncertainty of it all that held Corris.

The two Scotchmen looked on contemptuously, smoking their pipes steadily, and taking their regulation drinks—neither more nor less—at their stated times. Alone together, they summed up the position unhesitatingly.

"It's the drink. He canna haud it, an' he's let it get the better o' him. A doot he'll end bad. As for that sneakin' wee body, Corris, he juist leads him on. He'd dae onything if he thocht he micht learn something ill aboot a body."

Thus Scrymgeour, and Murray would nod his whole-hearted agreement.

They themselves always assured Conliffe of their belief in his innocence, but no assurance could be strong enough to counteract the steady torture of Lady Pilth's eyes. He was driven more and more to drink for relief, yet it brought him none, but rather an increased uncertainty. He awoke in the mornings in such a state of quivering nerves that he had to steady his trembling hand with a stiff whisky before he dared attempt to shave. From that until night he got on with artificial strength—never drunk, yet never sober. Meals gradually became a mere farce, and rather than meet Lady Pilth's eye he stopped away altogether—but that is anticipating events.

His wife made ineffectual protests. He would agree with her—even promise reform—and go his own way. She grew more silent, dark rings appeared round her eyes, and she spent much time alone in her cabin.

Peter Brown tried to renew the intimacy that had sprung up between them, unavailingly. He could not understand the look of fear that was in her eyes when he spoke to her. He could not know that it was the fear of the working of her own heart, and, with all his brooding, he could find nothing to account for it beyond his refusal to tell her what was not his to tell. That, he knew, was not enough. It might have aroused dislike, distrust, but not the look he caught in her eyes when he dared to speak to her.

The detective was not the man to probe such a matter as this to its depths. Diffident, unused to thoughts of womenkind, he was the last man on earth to guess the feelings towards him that she feared and hid. He could but acquiesce in her apparent desire to be

quit of him, and retire into his deck-chair with a book, more like a collapsed scaffolding than before.

For all her horror of the crime and its unknown perpetrator, Jocelyn Upton was perhaps the least permanently affected by it amongst the passengers. She was young and high-spirited, intensely interested in her own thoughts and feelings, and endowed with a great capacity for the enjoyment of life. It could not be expected that she would continue long under the oppression with which the first shock of the discovery of the robbery overwhelmed her.

More than ever was she thrown into the society of Frank Honiton. When she and her mother had met him in a hotel in Cairo, they had been alone and without even an acquaintance, and his easy friendliness had quickly fostered an intimacy which the narrow boundaries of the *Bedouin* were destined to ripen infinitely more quickly than could have happened on land.

Mrs Upton, quiet and colourless, was little of a companion to her spirited daughter, and was content to let her find amusement where she would. Honiton, from the beginning, had impressed her favourably, and she had no misgivings about throwing the two young people together. Everything, therefore, was in favour of their natural attraction towards one another developing into love. It was inevitable.

Honiton was inclined to be unaccountably subdued on the day following upon the events that have been recorded. Indeed, since his conversation with Jocelyn upon the subject of theft, he had lost something of the buoyant gaiety that had distinguished him. Jocelyn rallied him on his dulness. They were seated in their usual chairs on deck, the silent detective their only near neighbour.

"You have something on your mind, Frank. I know it!" she said, her bright face smiling on him prettily. "Let me be your father confessor. You'll feel all the better for it. Perhaps you'll even be capable of making yourself reasonably agreeable."

Honiton smiled slowly, and with an effort screwed himself up to meet her on her own plane.

"Are you sure you could bear the awful revelation of my misdeeds?" he asked.

"Oh, we confessors get hardened, you know," retorted Jocelyn. "It takes a lot to shock us. Have no fear of me, even if you have to disclose the horrible story of how, in your youth, you once nearly robbed an orchard."

"Even that you could bear, notwithstanding your intense dislike of thieves?"

It is curious how Honiton was impelled to introduce the subject that had caused him acute discomfort on the previous day, almost as though he was determined to prove his own mastery over himself.

"Yes, I could survive it, I think," said Jocelyn. "You see, robbing orchards is not theft in the *mean* sense of the word. It's not carried out with the vulgar object of gain, but as a means of getting rid of the superfluous spirits of youth. I shouldn't wonder if you *did* rob orchards when you were a boy, Frank. Did you?"

"Perhaps I did," he admitted. "But don't you think other robberies may sometimes be committed for the same motive—sportiness, rather than vulgar gain?"

"No," replied Jocelyn with decision. "You see, boys don't think of the moral side of things. They have no moral sense, but grown-ups have. There is no sport in taking something from an unsuspecting person. If you can imagine two people, each with a gold watch and chain, and each trying to steal it from the other, who knows that the other is trying to steal it, that would be quite a sporting event, but there is no sport in stealing in the ordinary sense. It's too one-sided."

"What about the police?" asked Honiton. "The thief has to take his chance against them all the time. That must impart an element of sport into the business, surely?"

"It doesn't make things equal," said Jocelyn, "because the *victim* has no say in the matter. Take the case of Lady Pilth, for instance. Whoever robbed her may, for all we know, have thrown her diamonds into the sea. Even if he were caught and punished, Lady Pilth would never have had a sporting chance of getting her diamonds back."

"That's an extreme case," protested Honiton. "The ordinary thief wouldn't throw his swag in the sea."

"Nevertheless, a thief's a thief and a quite undefendable creature. I'm surprised at you trying to stick up for him, unless—unless you have a personal motive. Frank," she turned upon him with raised finger and mock solemnity, "what have you done with Lady Pilth's jewels? Confess!"

Peter Brown looked up from his book with an expression of dismay. He had not heard what had gone before, and the sudden accusation came on him without warning. A glance at the girl's smiling face assured him as to her innocence of all ill intent, but he looked curiously at Honiton to see how he would receive such a keen thrust. If he expected any sign of discomfort, he was disappointed.

"The secret of all successful crime is—secrecy," replied Honiton lightly. "Surely you don't imagine I'm going to give myself away—even to you?"

The last words, added after a pause, were spoken more earnestly, with Honiton's eyes turned earnestly upon Jocelyn's pretty face. Her colour deepened under his scrutiny, and with a little self-conscious

laugh she turned her head away.

"Let's forget thieves and all such abominations," she said lightly, as she rose from her chair. "Come along, Frank, you must amuse me and keep me from worrying about other people's troubles. Let's play deck croquet. You don't take enough exercise."

Peter Brown watched them as they strolled off together to the windward side of the deck, where their game would not inconvenience the other passengers. He could not but observe what a handsome, well-matched pair they made, and he shook his head sadly when they had disappeared from his sight. Never had he met a man to whom he had felt so drawn. In his profession his acquaintances were mostly casual and did not develop into intimacy, and outside of it he had little opportunity to make friends. It was hard that he should be called upon to lead this friend that he had made to his doom. The detective's had been a busy and sordid life, and the interlude of the voyage had thrown him amongst a class whom he had little chance of meeting on terms of equality.

He thought of Joan Conliffe with her low voice, her carefully-hoarded words, and wondered at the ease and freedom he had felt with her. That he had lost already, as he must lose the friendship of Honiton when the voyage ended. He wished that he had never been sent to Cairo to effect this arrest. He had known no peace of mind since, and he had an instinctive feeling that his troubles were thickening. Perhaps it was not altogether instinctive. Realising, as he did now, the false position in which he had placed himself by his bargain with Honiton, and having already experienced so many of the difficulties to which it gave rise, it was natural enough that he should look to the future somewhat pessimistically.

He had given up all idea of interfering in the matter of Lady Pilth's diamonds. He could do nothing without admitting, at least to the captain, that he was a police officer, and he had determined that that was out of the question. Captain Spedley's decision also had relieved his conscience considerably. The jewels could not be disposed of until Liverpool was reached, and he would be a clever thief who would get them ashore once the Liverpool police had the matter in hand.

All of which did not prevent him keeping eyes and ears open to all that went on around him. He had already dismissed as preposterous the idea that Charlie Conliffe had any hand in the robbery. He had sifted all the passengers through his mind without any of them sticking in the meshes, even Cohun Balke, with all his mania for jewels, passing through without difficulty. There remained the stewards, who had easy

access to the cabin, but he was without data on which to estimate their characters. Garry he disliked as a slimy sort of person, but he recognised that sliminess unsupported by facts was no sure basis on which to build a theory.

No, he had to admit himself at a loss. His vivid imagination pictured various possible solutions to the mystery, one in particular so far-fetched and improbable that he smiled at his own absurdity. Yet the idea would return, entirely unsupported by evidence, and he could not banish it from his mind. Fantastic as it was—probably because it was so very fantastic—it fascinated him.

Of all the thoughts that passed through his mind during those days before the arrival at Gibraltar, Joan Conliffe took the foremost place. She was rarely absent from his mind, indeed, and it was natural that, notwithstanding the barrier that had risen between them, he should strive to find a means to be of service to her. He could not tell her of the love and pity for her that filled his heart, so he did the next best thing, as he thought—he tried to reform Charlie.

It was a hopeless effort from the start, but he persevered, haunting the smoking-room at times when he had never been seen there before, and joining in rounds of drinks for which he had no desire, in the hope of putting in a word of advice that would go home to the drunkard's heart.

It ended as might have been expected. It was on the afternoon of the day at the end of which the *Bedouin* arrived at Gibraltar, and Charlie was rapidly approaching a state of stupor. Peter Brown, seeing him put out his hand to fumble for the bell-push, attempted to remonstrate.

"Not another drink, Conliffe," he suggested, mildly enough, and leaning over, he placed his hand over Charlie's.

In a normal frame of mind he would have known better than to interfere, but the intensity of his desire to be of assistance to Mrs Conliffe blinded his judgment.

"You go to hell, blast you," replied Charlie, with true oriental politeness.

He wrenched his hand free, and pressed his thumb on the bell-push definatly.

Peter Brown made another effort.

"It's doing you no good, old fellow," he said, striving to speak in the hail-fellow-well-met fashion that was Charlie's own, and failing miserably in the attempt. "Give it a miss for to-day."

Until now, Charlie Conliffe had appeared to have forgotten the scene in his cabin when the detective had come to the rescue of Joan. Shame, perhaps, had made him banish it from his mind, but now shame was swamped in the fumes of the drinks that he had consumed, and an evil rancour rose to the surface.

"Go to hell, blast you," he

repeated, starting unsteadily to his feet, with staring bloodshot eyes. "I've had enough of you an' your damned interference. You leave me alone. An' leave my wife alone too—see? I know wen I've had enough, an' I don't want you to tell me. Get to hell out o' this."

Peter would have been wise to have accepted the advice, uncourteously as it was worded, but his good intentions proved too much for his discretion, and he attempted another appeal.

"You've had enough, Conliffe," he began, but got no further, for Charlie aimed a wild blow at his face, which would certainly have taken effect but for the interference of the spectators.

"Ca' canny, lad, ca' canny," cried Murray, and with remarkable promptitude, considering his stolid exterior, seized the upraised arm, and dragged the aggressor backwards into his seat, where Scrymgeour assisted in holding him.

"Ye'd better awa'," advised the latter. "Ye're daein' nae guid."

"Let me bash his damned face in," shouted Charlie, furious at the interference. "He's been getting off with my missus, and by God——"

Peter Brown heard no more. Horrified at the sacrilege, and fearful lest even worse should follow, he hurried from the smoking-room, nor did he again attempt to arrest the rapidly increasing pace of Charlie Conliffe's downfall.

(To be continued.)

THE REGIMENTAL DURBAR.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B.

I.

In a British regiment, as is well known to several millions of men who are now again civilians, but who have had the honour and glory of fighting in the Great War, there is, when the enemy permits, a daily ceremony known as Orderly Room. At the appointed hour and place, the Adjutant and the Sergeant-Major produce before the Colonel such malefactors as require correction for their major or minor military offences, known in the service severally and collectively as "crimes." These vary from indulging in a little too much "back chat" to a corporal, or a slight effervescence of spirits at inopportune hours, to desertion in face of the enemy, or eloping with the company's cash-box. The procedure is, however, exactly the same: the Colonel either deals with the case himself, or relegates the culprit to various Courts-Martial of intensive degrees of severity. Orderly Room, in fact, is the daily Court of Justice of the regiment.

In many, perhaps the majority of Indian regiments, this form of jurisdiction is replaced by another, which experience has shown is more in conformity with Indian ideas. For the formal British Orderly Room is substituted the Regimental Durbar, an assembly composed of all and sundry who may care to be present; and which is not only a judicial court where the Colonel deals out summary justice, but is also a formal but perfectly democratic assembly, whereat it is open to any one, whether the most senior officer present or the last-joined trumpeter, to have his say on any broad point connected with the well-being of the regiment. To emphasise the democratic nature of these durbars, it is open not only to officers, but also to the men to attend in mufti. It is not in the least impossible for the first case brought before the Colonel to be one of murder, rape, or sacrilege, in which event he would probably hand over the accused to the civil authorities; whilst the last may be connected with so ordinary a matter as the regimental sports, regarding which on some subtle point the boy trumpeter may have a few useful remarks to make. He in such case would be pushed forward by his bearded comrades to have his say before the Colonel and assembled Sahibs.

There is, however, one golden rule in the conduct of Regi-

mental Durbars which wise Colonels observe, and that is never to make a sit-down affair of it. This for the simple, though perhaps unworthy, reason that once a circle of Indians is firmly seated they take hours to dig up. Time is no object to an Oriental; it matters not in the least to him whether the Durbar lasts one hour or six, so long as he is squatting in some form or another, be it on his hunkers or on a chair. Thus the worldly-wise Colonel holds his Durbars in the open field, or on the edge of a verandah, or under a friendly tree, but always standing. To remain standing indefinitely does not in the least appeal to an Indian, and thus business is healthily and automatically expedited, enabling the dusky warrior to get away and squat, and, incidentally, smoke his bubbling pipe.

First, the squadron or company commanders hold their durbars, at which they examine the feet of newly-shod horses, inspect any men who have been supplied with new uniforms, allot remounts to those whose horses have been cast, hear complaints, grant short leave to the deserving, and inflict minor punishments on those who have earned them. The squadron accounts are also read out, so that the men may know how their money is being spent.

When these minor durbars are completed, the squadron commander, followed by his flock, joins up at the main Durbar to be held by the commanding officer. One of the first episodes at this is the periodical swearing in of recruits, which is made a formal and impressive ceremony in many regiments. Headed by the Regimental Colours, the recruits, in full dress, are marched forward and formed up in line facing the Colonel, whilst the Colours are so held that the recruit takes his oath of loyalty and discipline under their shadow. This oath each recruit proclaims in a loud voice in his own vernacular—and there are sometimes half a dozen different ones in a regiment—so that all may hear. He swears by all he holds most sacred, be it the Koran, or Guru Granth, or other strange god, that he will be loyal to the King his Emperor, that he will obey his superior officers in all things, that he will fight bravely against the King's enemies, and that he will go cheerfully and willingly wherever he is sent, whether by land or by sea. The recruit has usually been a year or so in the regiment before he is thus sworn in, and knows exactly what his obligations are. If he does not want to take this oath he may go, and there are plenty of others waiting for his place.

Very great tact and a thorough knowledge of every class of Indian in the regiment is required by a commanding officer, as one incident amongst many may demonstrate. One day a Gurkha, greenish-yellow with rage, came before the Colonel with his puggri off and holding in his hand what looked

like a lock of hair. It was! Spluttering with rage, he told his story. He was having a slight difference of opinion with a Yusafzai Pathan (may he perish in hell) regarding some small matter, and as is customary both sides began to make scandalous aspersions regarding the virtue and perfect rectitude of each other's female relations, more especially with reference to their several mothers and sisters. The Pathan, as is not unusual, was 6 feet in height, whilst the Gurkha, as is usual, was under 5 ft. 2 in. Using his superior height, complainant said, the Pathan knocked off his cap, which left him with a close-cropped head, on the crown of which was grown a thin long whisp for a special purpose. According to the religion of the Gurkha, he must always grow this whisp and keep it in good serviceable order, for by this alone can his god lift him up to heaven when he dies. The Pathan seized this whisp, probably merely to give it a tweak, though the Gurkha said of malice prepense; and it so happened that he was stronger than he thought, for the whole hope of salvation came away in his hand. "And here it is," vociferated the Gurkha, handing up the lock of hair to the Colonel. As he proceeded to explain, not only had this treatment hurt him exceedingly, but also was it a studied insult from a Mahomedan to a Hindu; moreover, if he died or was killed in battle before he could grow a new whisp of hair, he would perforce have to go to hell, because there was nothing left wherewith he might be lifted up to heaven. Furthermore, and this was possibly nearest his heart, he had to pay Rs. 25 to his priest for having lost his sacred lock. The Colonel with difficulty kept his countenance, but called for the Pathan. The Pathan was very apologetic, said the Gurkha had spoken lies about his female relations, but truth about the unhappy affray; that he only meant a little rough horseplay, and had no intention of insulting the Gurkha or his religion.

"Very well, Ahmed Shah; you will pay the fine of Rs. 25 which Singh Bir has to pay" (Ahmed Shah's face fell four holes, for it would take five months to pay off this fine), "and if ever I catch you at that sort of horseplay again, out of the regiment you go *ek dum*" (at a moment's notice).

Ahmed Shah saluted and retired.

"As for you, Singh Bir, I heartily condole with you, and shall send word to your priest that your top-knot was lost, so to speak, on active service. And I shall ask him, in the event of your premature decease, that this accident may be made known to your deity, so that he may seize you by some other part of your person, and thus carry you to heaven."

Singh Bir, now with a broad and satisfied grin, remarked, "Your Honour is Lord!" and saluting, departed.

Unskilfully handled, the incident might have resulted in

a bloody battle between 100 Gurkhas and 100 Pathans armed to the teeth.

Various reports and many subjects would be brought up at the Regimental Durbar and discussed at length; but in old days, when soldiering was more free and easy than it became later, the natural tedium of too much business might be agreeably interrupted by more interesting diversions.

In a popular regiment, or one with a great fighting name, there are often a large number of men waiting to enlist for whom there is no vacancy. On one such an occasion the Colonel suddenly thought of a novel method of selection. There was one vacancy, and many applicants were brought forward at Durbar by their friends in and out of the regiment in the hope of obtaining it. A good many of these the Colonel at once told to stand back, as manifestly not up to standard; then he made the rest strip, and carefully selected the best six. To these he said, "You are all fine young men and of good stamp, but I am unable to select one of you who is better than the rest. These, then, are my orders. We will after Durbar all proceed to the rifle-range, which is close by, and you shall each fire five shots at the target at 200 yards, and five shots at the target at 500 yards, and he who hitteth the bull's-eye most often shall receive the vacant place and be enlisted in 'The Guides.' I have spoken."

"Shahbash! Bravo! It is well spoken," exclaimed the men.

When the Durbar was over the candidates, accompanied by their friends and relations, trooped off to the rifle-range, and the greatest excitement prevailed. As each shot was signalled, the friends of the shooter either loudly congratulated him or equally loudly condoled with him, and condemned the marker to perdition. Rival candidates and their friends, on the contrary, were unanimously of opinion that the bull's-eye when made was a fluke which would never be repeated, and when a miss was signalled, considered that the marker was a righteous person worthy of every commendation. Finally, two men tied, and whilst each was firmly convinced and affirmed that the scorer was a man of inferior birth and blemished morals who had undoubtedly cheated him, they decided to toss up for the vacancy.

One of our Colonels was a remarkably good shot, both with the gun and with the rifle, and it was his habit to keep his eye in for the latter weapon by practising at crows with a rook rifle. As is well known, the Indian crow is a most pushing and impertinent fellow, as well as being an expert and audacious thief, and if too much tolerated collects in his hundreds and makes a garden, for instance, an unpleasant place to walk in. At the same time, he is a very observant bird, almost uncannily so, and knows as well as

you or I the difference between a walking-stick and a rook rifle. To pretend that a walking-stick is a rifle, bringing it smartly to the shoulder as if about to shoot, merely lays one open to the most studied disregard. On the other hand, if the most guileless-looking person with a nonchalant air, carefully concealing a rook rifle behind his back, approaches, every crow within view instantly departs, making the rudest remarks in a raucous voice.

By way of combining business, sport of sorts, and instruction in the art of shooting, the Colonel used very often to hold his Durbar under a lofty cotton-tree in the mess garden, which was the favourite rendezvous of all the crows in the district. After the squadron commanders had settled the smaller affairs at the squadron durbars, they would wend their way to the Colonel, and a fairly safe draw was the cotton-tree. Here the Colonel might pretty surely be found with his back against the trunk, his rifle carefully concealed, keeping a silent but exceedingly alert vigil.

As often as not, the arrival of these parties of men, far from discouraging the return of the crows, gave them confidence. They doubtless said amongst themselves, "The old man will now be too busy talking to these soldiers to notice, so let us take advantage of this to steal a few more things."

The Durbar opens. "This man, Ram Pershad," says "A" squadron commander, "wants seven days' leave to visit his home to bury his mother."

"But he has already on three previous occasions obtained seven days' leave to bury his mother," remarks the Colonel, who knows every one in the regiment and all their affairs to the fifth generation.

"Yes, sir, but he says that his mother on the other occasions, though very ill, did not die. But she really has died this time," replies with great solemnity "A" squadron commander.

"Wait a second," mutters the Colonel, and very quietly producing his rifle, draws a bee-line on a marauding crow perched high on the cotton-tree. Crack goes the rifle and down comes the crow. The men say gravely, "Wah! Wah! The Colonel Sahib sights his shots very well." The Colonel reloads his rifle, returns to business, and gives his verdict.

"Well, let Ram Pershad go this time. But enter in his sheet-roll" (soldier's pocket-book) "that his mother is dead and buried. I shall also view with some suspicion the declining health of other members of his family for some time."

Ram Pershad grins, salutes, and hastily departs. Curiously enough, on his arrival home he is met by an elderly but quite robust lady, whom he embraces affectionately and calls "Ma." Nor do there appear to be any visible signs and portents that a funeral is about to take place. Nevertheless Ram Pershad sighs deeply, for his very best wheeze is dead.

II.

One day after the discussion of greater matters, an Indian officer, with a fatherly smile, remarked that one of the young warriors had something to say. The young warrior, on being pushed to the front, said he wished to make a petition. A friend of his, who was also a warrior, had with conspicuous guile captured a cobra. A cobra, as every one knows, is a very deadly reptile, for a bite from a cobra means certain death within three hours. But a cobra can only bite with his head, therefore the said warrior took the opportunity when the said cobra was hastily retiring into a hole head first, to seize it by the tail. Holding the tail tight with his left hand, he clasped the cobra's body with his right hand, and then gently pulled. As more and more of the snake came unwillingly forth, the warrior kept on slipping his right hand forward till, when the cobra's head at length emerged, he had him tight by the tail with his left hand and tight round the neck with his right hand. Thus disposed, the cobra could hiss and fume and show his exceeding annoyance, but could do no harm. Thus carrying him delicately to the lines, the warrior called to another warrior for a sack, into which he skilfully hurled the cobra, and standing well clear tied up the mouth.

Now it so happened that in the same squadron there was yet another warrior who had a pet mongoose. As those learned in zoology know, a mongoose is an animal in appearance somewhat like an English stoat, which is reputed to have a positive passion for dining off venomous snakes, and especially off cobras. The cobra, naturally not being a consenting party to this gastronomic eccentricity, puts up a fierce fight, and as often as not deals a poisoned blow to his enemy, which obviates any necessity for future foraging expeditions.

This warrior now stepped to the front with his pet mongoose on his shoulder, and made request that the Sahib would act as umpire in a fight between the mongoose and the cobra. The Colonel readily consented, for none of us had ever been satisfactorily convinced from ocular demonstration that so harmless and impotent-looking an animal as a mongoose could really kill a cobra, the deadliest of the enemies of mankind. The first warrior was therefore sent off to fetch the sack containing the cobra, and the Durbar as a whole prepared to take a short respite from its less interesting labours.

Close by happened to be a set of disused officers' quarters, which had a large room on the ground floor, lately the drawing-room of a beautiful lady, but now quite empty. This room, as if made for the purpose, formed an ideal arena

for the classic battle. Two large French windows gave an excellent view into the interior, and these very conveniently furnished, with a little crowding and the use of overturned flower-pots and empty boxes, to a score or more of men, the advantages of the dress circle and upper boxes. These spectators were also quite safe. Inside the room the mantelpiece afforded accommodation for a few of the most honoured of the spectators, amongst whom were the Colonel, one Major, the Adjutant, and a stray subaltern. The only disadvantage of this seemingly favoured position was that though safe whilst on the mantelpiece, those on it would have to pass through exceeding perils if a call from the General or some other Imperial occasion should demand their passage across the floor whilst the cobra was in possession.

In the corner of the room was a high ladder left by the workmen who had been mending the ceiling. Each of the rungs of this ladder was occupied, great politeness being exhibited by the younger officers in pointing out to their seniors the stupendous and indeed dangerous difficulty of climbing to the higher rungs. A few heroes who happened to have on riding-boots and carried swagger-canes stood on the floor against the wall.

Before the conflict begins, be it known to those not inured to cobras that this unpleasant person cannot bite when he is lying along the ground or when wriggling along it. He must erect about half his length to strike, and when thus standing the erect part is about the height of an ordinary man's forearm when, with his elbow on the table, he raises it at right angles. Within the radius of that uplifted head is death; outside it, even by the fraction of an inch, is perfect safety. The only immunity is if a high boot or other impervious obstacle intervenes; whilst the attacker is, when standing erect to strike, extremely susceptible to a smart stroke on the neck from a cane. Indeed, his funeral may at once be arranged, for this stroke, if truly aimed, breaks the cobra's spine, and that is the end of him.

The audience being now accommodated, the warrior, holding a sack with great delicacy at arm's-length, is seen approaching, and he finds no difficulty whatever in making an easy passage through the crowd at the east window. Opening this window, he cuts the string at the mouth of the sack, deftly turns it over, and shoots the cobra into the room, shutting the window with remarkable celerity when this feat is accomplished.

The cobra, doubtless a little surprised at the brusque treatment, looked along the legs of the booted heroes, and seeing nothing particularly obnoxious about them, made off to a dark and quiet corner, curled up, and went to sleep. The second warrior, the owner of the mongoose, now appeared at the other window, and,

though bare-legged and barefooted, was so confident in the prowess of his champion that he walked into the room and placed the mongoose on the floor not far from the cobra. The cobra slept on, or pretended to do so, whilst the mongoose, not taking the slightest notice of him, carefully inspected the immaculate boots of the junior subaltern. These boots were a source of justifiable pride to the junior subaltern, and were, indeed, so brilliant that any mongoose might rightly admire them.

Clearly, however, some steps were required to encourage the latent ardour of the combatants. To this end the master of the mongoose threw little bits of raw meat in the direction of the cobra, which the mongoose, immediately neglecting the shining boots, proceeded to devour. This woke up the cobra, and he stood up to his full height, and used some manifestly strong language. Whilst thus erect, he looked very menacing to the gentlemen on the ladder quite close to him, and one stout Indian officer, who was seated on the lowest rung, looked hastily down and fervently exclaimed, "Perchance that devil will not seize me by the hinder parts?"

And now was to be seen a very curious piece of play. The thrower of meat cast one small bit just inside the radius of the cobra's strike. The mongoose went and had a look at it, but saw at once that he would be badly, indeed fatally, had if he entered the deadly circle; he would therefore have none of it. Another piece of meat was thrown, and fell just short of the other piece. The mongoose went up to this, and as he arrived the cobra gave two rapid strikes, but they fell just a fraction of an inch short of the piece of meat. The mongoose never turned a hair or blinked an eye, but calmly went on eating the meat, knowing that, one-eighth of an inch outside the circle, he was as safe as if he were one hundred yards away.

We all thought that the fight was off, and were beginning to wonder how we were going to get out of the room in safety and with dignity, and what was to be done about a loose cobra. Then something happened all of a flash. The cobra, red-hot with rage, still stood hissing death and destruction; he doubtless, too, was rather sore about the gills from having hit the floor so fiercely. The mongoose, seeming to grow reckless in his nonchalance, turned broadside on. The cobra hissed, "Thank God, I have got him!" and struck hard. The next second we saw that the mongoose had caught the cobra by the back of the neck at the exact moment when his fangs, missing their aim by a fraction, hit the floor. In less seconds than this sentence takes to write, the cobra was dead, bitten right through the back of the neck, thus severing the spine.

III.

Strange problems sometimes face the Colonel. One day at Durbar an Indian officer, one Ali Gul, an Afridi, brought up his son for enlistment — for every one, high or low, rich or poor, had to go through the ranks. Side by side riding in the ranks might be seen a prince of the blood and the son of a peasant. But it was more usual for an Indian officer first to take so near a relation as a son to the Colonel's bungalow, so that he might get the Colonel's private opinion as to whether the lad was up to the standard of the regiment or not, thus avoiding the chance of having him publicly rejected on the grounds of poor physique before all the men in open Durbar. Ali Gul himself was a splendid fellow, of magnificent physique, and as brave as a lion, who had already twice won the Star for Valour in battle.

His son, standing beside him, looked a poor creature—small, thin, and apparently of no stamina. The Colonel was rather embarrassed; he did not like to reject offhand the son of so brave and good a soldier, and thus blacken his face before the assembled multitude, nor did he care to take a lad evidently much below the usual standard to oblige any one. So he said, "Quite a nice boy, Ali Gul, who will doubtless fill out. Give him another year, and lots of good food, and then we will see about it." But Ali Gul would not take the hint. He stood his ground, and looking the Colonel square in the eyes, made answer—

"I know what is in your heart, Sahib. You think my son is not big enough or strong enough to be a soldier in 'The Guides.' But there are brave men who are neither big nor strong. Was not Lord Roberts, Sahib, such a one? Now let me tell your Honour a story which will show that this lad is not unworthy. A few weeks ago my son and a young friend of his, each aged about seventeen years, were making their way home through the mountains. Each of them had a Martini-Henry rifle in his hand, for, as your Honour knows, no unarmed man dare pass through the Afridi country. As they were hurrying along a shot rang out, and my boy's friend fell on the path grievously wounded. My son immediately got behind a rock and looked carefully around. Two more shots passed close to him, but he could not see whence they came, for the powder was smokeless. Moreover, his own rifle being a Martini-Henry, which fires black powder and makes a smoke, would instantly give away his position if he fired it. A few more shots came, and then, as the wounded boy on the path did not move, the marauders thought they had killed both, and that it was now safe to

come down and carry off their rifles, each of which is worth nearly Rs. 500 (£50) in that country. But they moved with great caution, only one man advancing whilst the others covered his advance. My boy, lying flat on the ground, wriggled to one side of the rock, and putting his sight at 500 yards, took careful aim and shot the robber stone-dead, and he fell headlong downwards. The smoke of his rifle gave away my son's position, and immediately a brisk and accurate fusilade hit that spot. But my son was not there, for the moment he had fired he dodged away from that rock, and like a cat worked his way unseen to another rock fully fifty yards away. He now knew whereabouts the enemy were, and watched and waited. After firing several more rounds he saw two men begin to advance, but very cautiously, and giving no chance for a shot. Thus they skirmished steadily on towards the spot where the wounded lad lay, and it was not till they were within 100 yards that my lad got another chance. He then saw a head cautiously raised, and peering intently at the rock whence my son had fired his first shot. In one second my son, who was on the flank, lifted his rifle and shot this second man dead through the head. He then repeated his first manœuvre and, without showing himself, slipped behind another rock, and waited for a long time. A loose stone came bowling down the hill and passed him, then he heard a scrambling, and peered forth with much caution. A man was running away, zigzagging up the hill. He let him go from reasons of caution, and then, after another long wait, crept along to his companion, whom he found still alive. As all was now quiet, he approached the nearest dead enemy, and took his rifle and ammunition, and then went on and fetched the rifle and ammunition of the other enemy he had killed. Carrying three rifles and three bandoliers, he ran many miles to my house, and thence brought back his uncle and brother to help his comrade home. Now, Sahib," concluded Ali Gul, "you have heard my story. Is the lad good enough for 'The Guides' or is he not? His fate is in your Honour's hands."

"Bravo!" said the Colonel; "without doubt he is a fine fellow, and brave of heart." Then turning to the Adjutant, "Enlist him from to-day, and make him a Lance-Naick (Lance-Corporal) on the spot."

Sometimes there are complaints made against the men by outsiders—villagers, tradesmen, or money-lenders. These all attend Durbar, and make their complaints to the Colonel before all assembled. The villagers' complaints generally referred to the regimental grass-cutters, more especially in old days before each regiment had been given a piece of Government land on which to grow

grass. Indian cavalry horses are fed on fresh-cut grass gathered in daily for about half the year, whilst hay is stacked at the same time for the remaining period. This grass used to be obtained from the sides of roads, the borders of fields, railway or canal embankments, from anywhere and everywhere, the grass-cutters going many miles daily in search of fresh fields. Whilst cutting the grass, their pack-mules or ponies, though knee-haltered, might well stray off into the villagers' crops: hence these tears.

With these villagers the Colonel would take a fatherly air. He would have a little chat and banter with them, and thus get them into a good temper. Then he would point how extraordinarily lucky they were to have so fine a regiment quartered near them, a regiment which bought all their barley and oats and chickens and eggs, and was, in fact, a perfect godsend to them. Moreover, were not many of their sons and brothers soldiers too, who would never harm villagers wilfully? And he would wind up by pointing out that these were no private horses, but the horses of the great King, and that unless they are fed the soldiers could not fight and kill the enemies of the King, so that the villagers might live in peace and safety, and gather in their crops and become rich.

With money-lenders the Colonel would have a very short and sharp way. He would tell them it was against his orders that money should be lent to the men, and if they did so it was at their own risk. The Civil Courts were open to them. With tradespeople it was different. If such a one had a claim against one of the men, he had to substantiate it; and if after discussion it was judged correct, the soldier would be ordered to pay off the debt in monthly instalments.

In these seemingly rough-and-ready ways the affairs of an Indian regiment are managed, and with great success. The prestige of the British officer is so high, and his absolute integrity and honour so well established, that just a sprinkling of them will thus rule and keep in a state of perfect discipline a regiment of a thousand Indians. And these, be it remembered, are not like a thousand Englishmen or Scotsmen, all of one blood; but there may be amongst them half a dozen different tribes and as many castes and religions. And these various sects and classes and tribes are often fiercely antagonistic to each other, and would be at each other's throats in five minutes at the smallest provocation, but for the calm control of their British officers. It is not mere lip-service or oriental flattery, but a deeply-rooted sentiment, which will cause an Indian to murmur oft-times, "Indeed, these Englishmen are a nation of princes!"

THE SAGA OF A SHIP.

BY DAVID HANNAY.

WHEN the expansion of England was beginning there was a certain "capital ship," a gallant and famous ship. Brave men sailed in her to do notable feats. Mighty achievements came from the leading they gave. She was born in 1595, and she carried the flag, in the first attempt to take hold of a place for Englishmen to keep, not merely to plunder and ransom, in the West Indies. Then she was the "Admiral" of the "General," chosen by "the Governor and Company of the Merchants of London trading into the East Indies," to rule the first of the fleets they sent out "for the honour of their native country, and the advancement of the trade of merchandize." In that age Admiral was mostly the rank of the ship, and General was the designation of the commander-in-chief. They were not rigidly consistent in their practice. Nicholas Downton thought himself entitled to write of the Admiral "she" in one clause of his orders for keeping company, and of the Admiral "he," who was his own stout and careful stiff and bombasted self, in the next. Yet the name went, as a rule, to the vessel, and only by exception to the officer. The life of this "tall admiral" is truly saga matter, and not the least because her end was in a storm of battle, fighting single-handed against numbers.

When she was launched at Deptford her builder gave her the name *The Malice Scourge*. It was written with all the large freedom of our ancestors, who had too much wit and wisdom to be enslaved by spelling, "Mallice" or "Malyce," "Scourge," "Scurge," "Scourdge," or "Scurg"—the "Mallescourge" in one word, or the "Mall" or "Mal Escourge" in two. Pedants have thereby been led astray. Her builder knew why he baptised her as he did. He was the Viking George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland, a profuse and magnificent gentleman of the great Queen's Court, who wasted his substance in splendid living, and strove to restore his estate by privateering. He was perfectly candid touching his desire to make profit for himself, and nobody need think the worse of him on that account, though Southey did think that a gentleman of the Earl's dignity ought not to have confessed to mercenary aims. The Earl had learnt by costly experience that a strong warship was needed when one had to tackle Portuguese carracks or Spanish galleons. They alone carried the rich cargoes of jewels, plate, and fine spices. He had also found out by a bitter disappointment that to

co-operate with the "capital ships" of the Queen would be to play the part of jackal to very little or no advantage. The case of the *Madre de Dios* carrack had left him in no doubt on that point. Her Majesty had a leonine way of laying her white lioness paw on the prize, and of distributing the very least she well could. So that he might be the more independent, and have the better prospect of gain in future, he built the largest ship which any subject had caused to be launched up to that date.

We will trouble ourselves but little with the never-to-be-completely-solved problem: What was the tonnage of the *Malice Scourge?* One said she was of 800 tons; another gave her 900. When the Earl parted with her she was "taken" at 600. All the authorities who differ cannot be right, and it is altogether believable that no one of them is. We do know that when she passed from the ownership of Cumberland to that of those members of the Company who financed and organised the First Voyage, she carried an armament of 38 guns, and that their total weight was 63 tons. Now this is 5 tons more than the weight of the 38 guns and carronades of the "18 pdr. 32 gun" frigate *Medusa* in the early years of the nineteenth century. And she was measured at 920 tons. The *Malice Scourge* was perhaps of the same size, or even a little larger. But then, on the other hand, she may have been overgunned. As she was found to be in need of a thorough repair in 1600, though then but five years old, it does look as if she may have been unduly strained. Moreover, her new masters took the two biggest guns of her armament out of her—the two demy cannons, which together weighed 6 tons. Perhaps they considered her as being overweighted. Perhaps they had other reasons; and thirdly and lastly, perhaps such questions as these go into the general heap of the marine stores of history. She was a "capital ship," and by the consent of all good judges, a fine one. What is important to us is to know the men she carried and their achievements.

The first achievement was the capture of San Juan de Porto Rico in 1598. The expedition is deserving of more memory than careless posterity has bestowed on it. It was the last of the brilliant Elizabethan raids, and carried the germs of other less showy but more lasting work to be done in a very few years. The direction of the intentions is something in human affairs, even when men fail of their aim. Now the intentions of the Earl and his colleagues—for he was not alone in organising the venture—went far beyond mere plunder and exacting of ransom. They were not content to disturb the Spanish King's dominions and intercept his treasure in order to cripple him in Europe. Drake and others had been at that work

for years with striking local successes, but without producing much lasting result. Philip's resources were delayed on their way to him, and his subjects suffered. It was easy, and generally safe, to fall on the small Spanish townships of the islands and the main wherein there were but few Europeans thinly spread over huge distances, and scattered in mere handfuls, living far apart from one another. The English injured those on whom they dropped, but in the main King Philip's revenue reached him sooner or later. And that was bound to happen, because the raiders hurried home when they had "made their voyage" by capturing prizes. They usually came back, cruelly diminished in numbers by the country fevers, and more often than not as poor as when they went—or poorer. We remember the successes and forget the failures—the raids which were beaten off, as happened to Sir Anthony Shirley or the others who came back from a bootless errand because no prizes were met. Something more than a sweep out and a return was needed to cripple the Spanish King for good. Thinking men in London and in the marauding fleets too had no doubt what that something ought to be. We must take hold of a port in the West Indies and keep hold of it. In 1598 the object was to take possession of San Juan de Porto Rico, make a "strength" of it, and a headquarters for a permanent squadron. It was a goodish harbour in an island worth tilling, and capable of producing needful supplies. Moreover, it was well placed to serve a force maintained to cut the communication between Spain and her Indies.

A good plot and good friends. The Earl, as has been said, was not alone in his enterprise. A syndicate or company, or joint stock, had been formed to provide funds. We may note with interest that one of the capitalists—whom Elizabethans called "adventurers"—was Mr Paul Banning, or Bannyng, as some will have it—grocer, Alderman of Farringdon Ward Without, and then of Walbrook. In three years he and the Earl will both be among the Governors of the East India Company. If Cumberland handed over the *Malice Scourge*, after sharpish bargaining, Banning sold the *Susan* for the First Voyage. Then they were to succeed.

In 1598 they did not—or not in a lasting way. The Spaniards could not prevent them from taking San Juan, but the country fevers drove them out. It was a fine voyage of the orthodox Elizabethan stamp. First, the Earl cruised off Lisbon, and blockaded the outward-bound carracks, which did not dare to stir abroad while he was there. Then he went on to the Canaries, where they—*i.e.*, the Earl in the *Malice Scourge* and seventeen other vessels, strays and stragglers omitted—had the usual

diversified intercourse with the islanders, some hostilities, a good deal of barter, baffled efforts to catch a prisoner, who would be good for a large ransom, and in a general way civilities as between persons. We hated the Spaniard in the abstract, and got on fairly well with him individually. Then having, to tell the plain truth, wasted more time than ought to have been spared in prowling for prize and ransom when a serious operation was on hand, they all went on to the Antilles.

To be sure, there would be some pedantry in treating the foray on Porto Rico as an operation of war to be solemnly criticised. It was a dashing adventure of knights, who were not indifferent to the sweets of ransom getting, and of men of business who would fight when they saw occasion, but were there mainly on the "plundering account." There was a serious purpose at the heart of it, but the execution so far appears to have followed pretty closely the lines of a lively undergraduate rag. Of course, that had to end. So when Cumberland had brought his flock to the Virgin Islands, he gave them an opportunity to refresh themselves at medicinal springs, and with fruit (need one note that they were suffering from scurvy, as crews always did then in voyages of any length!); and he did more. He drew the reins of discipline firmly. Standing on a big stone under a beetling cliff, he gave his followers a talking to. It came to this: that he had so far let them go much as they pleased, but that now, when they were nearing the post of the foe, there must be no more nonsense. They acknowledged the hand of the master. Companies were formed (at that advanced hour!), practice was given, and order reigning, at last they sailed westward along the rocky north coast of Porto Rico.

San Juan is at the west end of a narrow islet, which lies parallel to the coast of the island. One could wade into it at the east end, but the Spaniards had a fort there. The scientific soldier would have begun by battering down the fort with ships' guns. These men were knights, undergraduates, larky schoolboys. They waded at the fort, and were, to the number of fifty or thereabouts, shot down. The Earl had a narrow escape of making an end tinged by absurdity. As he was pressing on in the shallow water his foot slipped, and he fell on his back. It was a disastrous position, for he wore armour, and it held him down. Zealous servants pulled him out, well on the way to being drowned, and he was very sick. The attack failed, as it was bound to, and then they ended where, if not common-sense at any rate, professional soldiering would have taught them to begin. Ships were brought round, and the fort battered down. Being in number not so few as a thousand, they

marched into San Juan, where they found only women, children, and old men. The younger had betaken themselves to other forts. With the light-hearted contempt for truth of all the Elizabethans, the historians of the voyage describe San Juan as being of the size of Oxford. There were probably fifty villages in Oxfordshire which were larger. The Earl, a thorough gentleman, kept good order, even to the extent of stringing up one misguided scoundrel among his followers, who had offered violence to a woman.

He had the town easily enough. The difficulty was to keep it. As far as the hostility of the Spaniards was concerned, there was nothing to fear. They had no troops, and the creole settlers were but few. The real defenders of King Philip's possessions now, and more or less always, were far less his subjects than the country fevers. The garrison the Earl put in charge of the forts when they surrendered soon began to die at a terrible rate. While some of the ships were absent looking for prizes, which they had not the good fortune to meet, the survivors lost heart, took ship, and came away, fleeing before "Yellow Jack." The expedition came home with small booty and a monstrous loss of life. It was currently reported that three-fourths of the sailors and soldiers died. Certain it is that the loss of life by disease was very high. The captain who brought the ship home was not the gentleman who took her out in very many cases. He left his bones in the West Indies, or down in the bottomless sea. The ambition had been too great for the means employed. Not here, but in far distant seas, and in far other ways, was the *Malice Scourge* to be instrumental in preparing the ground for a British Empire.

The Earl of Cumberland was the more truly a brief abstract of his time, for that he began by raiding and ended by promoting the trade of merchandise. His name stands at the head of that body of Englishmen to whom Elizabeth on the 31st December 1600—at the last hour of the century of romance, and in the eve before the dawn of centuries of trade and colonisation and business—granted the first Charter of the East India Company. He joined the merchants of London, who had soberly, after grave study, resolved to promote the honour of their country by the trade of merchandise. He aided them, and set forth the reasons for the venture, the ways of attaining success, the conditions of the task; or let us, to be exact, say that he prompted some better pen than his to put it all on paper. His unaided prose was wildly involved—not to say broken-backed. Alderman Banning and other members of the Company were old allies of his. He sold them the *Malice Scourge*, not giving her away (as why should he, even if his affairs had not been in sad

confusion, as they were?), but parting with his ship on terms. We hear the outcome of a tart exchange of views in this entry in the 'First Letter Book' of the Company.

"The said Committees (*i.e.*, committee-men), being desired to talk and confer about the price of the *Malice Scourge* (Mall Escourge it stands in the text), had long conference about the same, and in the end my lord came again himself, telling them he perceived what pains they had taken about this business, but he said he would take no less than £4000, which, seeing they would not give, he would lose no time more about the same; but since they would not buy her, he would proceed about his own business, and so prayed them to do theirs, and so departed."

Though the Earl departed in dudgeon, the bargain was not quite off. The committees offered £3500, and then bettered their offer to £3700, and that sum he took, part in money and part in stock.

So the *Malice Scourge* passed from the trade of war to the trade of merchandise; from Cumberland to the Company's service; parted with her first name, and became the *Red Dragon;* ceased to carry high-born warriors on forays, and bore with her James Lancaster, together with the Cape Merchant and factors who were to plant English commerce in the East. Mr Stevens gave his edition of the Company's 'First Letter Book' a misleading name when he headed it 'The Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies.' Some of the merchants of London had done business with those Indies for years, indirectly through Lisbon, directly, though by round-about routes, as members of the Muscovy and the Smyrna Companies. They had consulted the best-printed books. They had the advice of men who had actually gone far East—Ralph Fitch for one. Knowledge abounded with them no less than the courage to adventure. It was a sober spirit, thoughtful and well-informed, which glowed in them, a strong well-controlled central heat, which did not waste itself in flames. The 'Letter Book,' with its brief entries, shows a body of careful men resolved to deserve success by minute attention to detail. The provision of beef, pork, flour, beer and cider, scales of diet, choice of cargo, and the supply of bullion are all seen to, and withal the Company could rise to a level of grave eloquence on a fitting occasion. When all was ready, a last word remained to be spoken. The Queen had authorised the "General" Lancaster to govern and punish. But the commission was personal to him "without any appointing of succession."

What, then, if he were to die at sea? They could not apply to her Majesty to supply the omission without some appearance of lack of respect for

her and her council. The committees foresaw a possible need for the choice of a successor in remote seas, perhaps on the other side of the world, when no technically correct authority was there to make it, and they trusted these their servants, who were also their brother Englishmen, to play the part of free self-governing men.

"Whereas . . . it lieth not in us"—their words echo at once the formulas of legal documents and the style of Scripture with its beat and repetitions—"to give any warrant for the correction of offences by penal laws to be executed upon the bodies of any her Majesty's subjects, we do in that behalf as to men having reason and discretion, and to men that fear God, offer unto your good consideration the benefit of order and peaceable agreement in matters and enterprises undertaken for a common good, reposing in you, our several merchants and all you our several officers, appointed and entertained in this voyage, a special hope, trust, and confidence, that you will accord and agree together, and join in friendship and amity, to do and execute your uttermost endeavours for the benefit of the voyage without contentions, discord, or emulation, to be used among yourselves therein, by that general regiment and sea government which our English fleets do use when they sort themselves, having a special regard and sure respect to him that is your Principal or Cape Merchant: and so we commend you and your travails to God's providence, who guide you with His fear, and defend you from all dangers."

Trust in God, and keep your powder dry, not presuming to call on Him to perform miracles on your behalf.

They sailed in February 1601, a great date, for then the building of the British Empire in India began. There were four of them—the *Red Dragon*, the *Hector*, the *Susan*, the *Ascension*, and a victualler, which was to be dismantled and turned adrift when her stores had been drawn on, and she was no longer needed. The *Red Dragon* represented half or even a little more than half the whole tonnage of the fleet. Lancaster sailed in her. The Company had spared neither thought nor labour in the preparation of the voyage, but they did nothing wiser than the choice of their officer. Lancaster had begun as soldier and merchant, had lived in Lisbon, had sailed to the East with Raymond in 1591, had commanded a mixed force of rival English raiders, French and Flemish privateers, in an attack on Pernambuco, with remarkable tact and power of managing men, and therefore with signal success. He had knowledge, and, what is much rarer, the art of using knowledge. He was firm, patient, ready to strike when necessary, and absolutely loyal to his task. Therefore the First Voyage was a complete success. He may not have been "a gentleman" in the sense the

word had when applied to that Sir Edward Michelborne whom the Company would not hear of as their commander, though he was twice pressed on them by so great a personage as Lord Treasurer Buckhurst. If so, then England was very rich in men who deserved to be "gentlemen."

The new career of our ship was to be prolonged for nearly twenty years, and was to be filled with both work and adventure, trading and fighting. She carried Lancaster to Sumatra, Middleton to the Spice Islands, Keeling to the islands. It was in her that Best fought the Portuguese off Swally, in the Gulf of Cambaya. She met her heroic end in the islands, and at the hands of the Dutch. Her cruises spin a thread on which one might hang a whole history of real victory and apparent failure. They began with a real success, but not with one which promised great consequences. Much as the Company knew, it could not foresee that its field was to be in Hindustan and the Deccan—not in the Indian archipelago. What it had in its mind was the spice trade, for the profits were certain and great. Nor did the knowledge of the merchants of London and their servants as yet extend to familiarity with trade winds and monsoons, currents and seasons. The First Voyage was begun at the wrong time, and was long, with the usual consequence of scurvy, though Lancaster kept the crew of the *Dragon* (the *Red* was soon dropped), by the aid of lemon juice, in better health than the other ships. More than a year and a half had passed before the *Dragon*, with the *Hector* and *Ascension*, came to an anchor at Achin, in Sumatra. The crews had been sadly diminished by disease. But the three made a stately show, and they were well received by the Sultan of Achin. The presents sent out by the Company to placate the "mighty" potentates of the East were duly delivered—a silver fountain and basin of 203 ounces, with a looking-glass — Venetian — an adorned helmet, and a fan. A letter of a profusely complimentary order from Queen Elizabeth was duly handed to the Sultan. Her Majesty might not have been best pleased if she had known the history of the prince she addressed as brother. Ali-uddin Shah had begun life as a fisherman, had thriven by the wars, and had planted himself on the throne after butchering his master, Mansur Shah, together with all his family. Our ancestors soon began to realise the quality of the potentates they were at first inclined to regard with reverence. For the present, Ali-uddin, who was very old, and no less wicked and astute, was abundantly civil. He belauded Elizabeth, caused himself to be cooled with the fan offered him, invited Lancaster and his officers to dinner, and did them the signal honour of entertaining them with a dance

of his "women." Few, indeed, were the guests who were so highly favoured. Lancaster enjoyed the feast, but found the arrack given him to drink much too potent. So he begged leave, which was graciously granted, to dilute it with water.

Dinners and dances and rides on elephants were very well, but the General was there for business, and took an early opportunity of coming to the point with the Sultan. Ali-uddin met him half-way. We cannot flatter ourselves with the supposition that he loved us, but then he hated the Portuguese, with whom we were still at war. We were the enemies of his enemies, and that was enough. A licence to buy pepper was the more easily given, for that it was a royal monopoly, and the profits went direct to the pocket of Ali-uddin himself. He entered right cheerfully into a plot to detain a Portuguese agent, who was watching at Achin, while Lancaster had time to cruise towards the Straits of Malacca, and make a valuable prize. All the aged monarch asked in return was that Lancaster would bring him a fair Portuguese maiden. As he was then ninety-five, this stipulation may pass for an example of royal Malay humour. The captive was not brought. A successor of Ali-uddin had a more serious demand to make. He asked that, by way of return for his goodwill, the King of England would supply him with a cannon of such proportions that a man could sit upright in the bore. Neither did he get what he wanted. When this voyage was made—that is to say, full cargoes had been secured by trade and capture—Lancaster named Master William Starkey to remain at Achin as Chief Factor, with two assistants and eight men to "learn the language" and the ways of the trade. Then he sailed for home, and arrived safe after an arduous voyage, and visible hazard of total loss off the Cape.

His "travails" were over, and he spent the remainder of his life, which ended in 1618, in ease and with rank, for the King knighted him. The *Dragon* was only at the beginning of her toils. She must have been a well-built ship to begin with, or she was repaired from the keel upwards again and again. In after times it was an accepted rule that two Indian voyages would wear a ship out. She went on many more than two. Her next was under command of Henry Middleton, who had been captain of the *Hector* with Lancaster, and again to the Spice Islands. Times were changed. Peace was made with the King of Spain and Portugal. English captains were forbidden to assail the Portuguese. The Dutch had not made peace, and even when they did arrange the twelve years' truce in 1609, went on in the Eastern seas as before. They were attacking and taking Portuguese forts when the *Dragon* came on from Bantam to join them at Ternaté. From the first we hear

the mutterings of a coming conflict. Dutchmen and Englishmen might entertain one another at dinner, and profess to have a common cause, but it was impossible for these two to live in peace in the Spice Islands. The Dutch, who had been at the cost of money and life to drive out the Portuguese, considered that they were entitled to seize the monopoly of the trade in nutmegs and so forth as their reward for having liberated the natives. The English held that they were at liberty to trade, in the first place, on the general principle that the sea is open to all, and in the second, because the Dutch were frogs of the Batavian marsh, warmed to life by the unguarded generosity of Queen Elizabeth. This, in truth, most fantastic version of her Majesty's policy was entirely rejected by Mol and Sebastiaanzoon and other Dutch captains. The situation was in early stages rather comic. Middleton hung about the outskirts of the hurly-burly, made up of the conflicts of Dutch with Portuguese, and of native kings of Ternaté, with brother sultans of Tidore, all mixed up in the same confused scuffle. He tried to make the best of both worlds, by selling munitions of war to the Portuguese, and by nipping in to pick up the trade behind the Dutch. He could do nothing by force, for a reason which is patent in the narrative of the voyage. It abounds in such matter as this: "March the first, the winds all northerly; this day died of the flux, Thomas Wheeler. The second day the wind at the north-west for the most part; this day died of the flux, Richard Hedges and William Flud." The monotony of these entries becomes horrible, and it is no wonder to find Middleton lamenting his weakness. They had to fall back on hiring Chinese and other native seamen. So they could not have fought the Dutch if they had wished to. The root of the whole evil was just this, that Englishmen, even Cape Merchants and factors, would not follow the wise example of Lancaster and dilute their arrack. Hence the "flux"—that is to say, the dysentery—which swept them off in prodigious numbers. The high profits of the Company, 280 per cent in one case at least, were dearly bought. But it was not the fault of the merchants of London if their countrymen in the East would destroy themselves by riotous living. The second voyage paid well, in spite of the Dutch, but it does not make a fine story.

As for her third voyage—well, she went out to the islands, and came home with a cargo in the way of trade. And there is no more to be said of that mild interval. But there remain two cruises of a very different character. In 1612 she was the "Admiral" of Thomas Best, who commanded in the tenth voyage of the Company, having with him the *Dragon*, *James*, *Solomon*, and *Hoseander*. By this time the mer-

chants had discovered that there was more, and better, to be done in the East than to go directly to the Indian Archipelago for spice and back home. They were looking for an establishment on the west coasts of India, and were stretching their hands out to the Red Sea. Surat, on the Gulf of Cambaya, was the place where they were trying to fix a safe "factory." Their path was no easy one, for ashore they had to deal with the then, and for a hundred years afterwards, haughty power of the Great Mogul. On the sea they had to look for the hostility of the Portuguese, who still seemed to dominate on the Malabar coast, and up to Muscat and Ormus. Yet the Company and its servants were nowise afraid of the Portuguese, who were in full decadence. They were strictly forbidden to attack. The King would not allow of aggression, but if they were assailed they were free to defend themselves. So Best and his four ships came to Surat in October (eight months after they sailed from England), ready to help to obtain a permission to set up a factory from the Mogul in a peaceful way if possible, but nowise disinclined for a fight, if there must be fighting. And there had to be. In November a Portuguese fleet, four galleons and a swarm of "frigates," turned up outside Swally, at the mouth of the Tapti river, on which Surat stands. The Viceroy at Goa had been trying to persuade the Mogul, and bribe his officers, to send away the factors, who were petitioning for a permit to trade, and to forbid the English ships to come in. As that did not succeed with him, he sent his fleet to turn them out. The Mogul's officers, for their part, having no naval force to keep the peace, looked on, prepared to applaud the victor and accept presents from both.

One cannot quite like Thomas Best. His piety was garrulous; he wore broad phylacteries, and he made long prayers at the street corners. Moreover, there was a tendency to shrewish unreason in the man, and in the end he made himself intolerable to his masters. It is to his credit that he did the right thing at Swally, but the merit belonged in good part to the company's factor, Mr Aldworth, as firm and clear-headed an Englishman as ever set foot in India, whether as factor, covenanted civil servant, or officer of Sepoys. Aldworth saw that there must be a fight, and he meant to have one, and so he told Best. When he was in for it the General bore himself well. His long prayers in the cabin and his quotations of the 16th Psalm on the quarter-deck may have been too effusive, but we must not doubt that they were sincere. He really did play "the servant of the Lord with the Bible and the sword," not only manfully but intelligently —standing out in the *Dragon* to take advantage of the confusions of the Portuguese, who

allowed themselves to become divided among the sands and deeps at the mouth of the Tapti. For several days there was a repetition of these sorties. Sometimes the *Dragon* fought single-handed; at other times she was well backed up by the *Hoseander* and the rest. The Portuguese showed no lack of spirit, but were woefully short of efficiency. The badness of their gunnery was beyond the beyonds. In the end they had to go off with the shame, and the odd hits, having done little damage, and suffered pretty severely. The Mogul's officers and people applauded the victor. Perhaps they were sincere. So far, the English had not bullied them, whereas the Portuguese had bullied them a great deal. It was a holiday for them to see him trounced. The English factors got their permit, which they called, not so it seems quite accurately, a Phirmaund. The *Dragon*, after carrying the first permanent English agent to Achin, had now helped conspicuously to win a firm establishment on the mainland of India—the grain of mustard seed from which a mighty tree was to grow.

Then seven years later the *Dragon* came to the Eastern seas to meet her death. She ended where she had begun in those waters—on the coast of Sumatra. Much had come to pass since she had sailed into the roadstead of Achin with Lancaster. The Dutch had extended their power in the islands. In 1619 they were directed by one of the most formidable of the men whom Europe has sent to Asia, Jan Pieterzoon Coen, a very good gunflint of a man, clear and without veins in head or heart. He knew what he wanted, and that it was attainable, and how it was to be won, and he would do all that was necessary to win. And that aim of his was to make an end of English competition among the islands. The English Company did not go the right way to work to oppose him, nor did it find the right men. Martin Pring was a good seaman, and was nothing else. Sir Thomas Dale, the general, was an old Low Country soldier, who had brought the turbulent English colony in Virginia to order by grim discipline. There was no weakness in Dale, but neither was there the needful kind of intelligence. Being a regular bred soldier in a war made up of sieges, he had nothing so near his heart as the taking of forts. He became besotted by the desire to get possession of a Dutch fortress at Jaccatra in Java. While he was vainly trying to win what to him was the one thing necessary, he allowed Coen to collect a far superior fleet and sweep him off to the Coromandel coast, where he died. He also left a number of vessels scattered about in the islands. Having concentrated to rid himself of the chief English force, Coen divided to discuss the fragments.

One of them was composed of the *Dragon* and three small vessels. They were all at Tiku

on the west coast of Sumatra —Java Major we often called it in those days. They were taking in pepper, and were much "pestered" with half-stowed cargoes, when the Dutch squadron of six ships of war swooped down on them on the 1st October. The Hollanders, it seems, came on without saying other words than "amayne English dogs." The smaller vessels gave no help. Exasperated survivors of the disastrous fight accused their skippers and crews of meanness of spirit. One of the captains, Barwick, was roundly and rather oddly charged with having surrendered from cowardice or "sincerity of religion." The words would seem to imply that he was a Quaker before Quakerism, or a very early "conscientious objector." But, on the whole, the crews of the smaller vessels appear to have done all they could. They were too weak to be of any real help to the *Dragon* except in one way—by reinforcing her crew. And that they did. Their men, except a mere remnant of caretakers, came over to the big ship. In her captain, Bonnar, there was no weakness. Two Dutchmen laid him aboard. One was of 32 and the other of 38 guns. Either would have been a fair match for the *Dragon* at any time. Seeing that they were cleared for action and fitted for war, while she was hampered by the cargo she was taking in, they had an immense advantage. That she fought for an hour is proof enough that she was not given up. Captain Bonnar did all a man could do, and fell stricken down by a shot which "cut one of his ribs and backbone asunder." With this awful wound he lingered for ten days. He was less fortunate than Nelson, for the shot had spared his lungs, and he must have endured the utmost agony before he was released by death. And that was what Nelson, who knew that his back was broken, had in his mind when he asked the doctor whether death would be long in coming to him. Twenty-eight of the Englishmen in the *Dragon* died in the desperate attempt to beat off an overwhelming attack. A great number were wounded. The survivors did not surrender till all had been done that men could do, and all had been done in vain.

The Dutch landed the surviving crews of the four vessels, 270 in all, "among the heathen," and so left them. They were picked up by other English ships. As for the *Dragon*, her timbers remained in the possession of the enemy. He found a use for them. Coen had swept the native town Jacecatra off the face of Java by fire and sword. What had been the *Dragon* was worn out carrying materials for the new Dutch fortress, Batavia, which he began to build on the ruins. When the battered and exhausted wreck was offered by him to the English Company's servants they refused to receive it. She had done her work, and was dead.

ON HAZARDOUS SERVICE.

BY MERVYN LAMB.

CHAPTER XXI.—ADRIENNE RETURNS TO HER POST.

It was with feelings of some regret that Adrienne stepped on board the Dutch boat at Harwich.

At first she had found the British somewhat cold, and lacking in the small attentions to which she was accustomed in France — in fact, they had seemed rather afraid of her; but this impression soon wore off, and she began to appreciate the calm courtesy and respect with which she was invariably treated. Even the Intelligence Officer at Harwich, who had, by order and for the benefit of the other passengers, treated her with considerable suspicion and been anything but polite, had managed unobtrusively to convey his sympathy for her, and as the boat finally cleared the harbour she felt as if she was leaving friends whom she had known for years, instead of only a few weeks.

Her fellow-passengers were a heterogeneous collection, and though they had presumably been passed by the British authorities, Adrienne had been warned to be careful, as it was a moral certainty that the immunity of these boats from submarine attack was not entirely due to consideration for the Dutch, and that there were enemy agents aboard. As she stepped on deck, carrying her sole luggage in the shape of an old compressed cane suit-case, a good many eyes were turned admiringly in the direction of the pretty girl in the simple blue serge coat and short skirt, under which appeared well-turned ankles and a serviceable pair of boots, the heels of which, incidentally, contained several notes of high value.

Even in war-time any sea voyage is very like any other, and there is no necessity to describe this particular one, nor yet the Customs inspection at Rotterdam.

Adrienne's old suit-case was thoroughly ransacked, but presumably contained nothing beyond what a young lady carries on such occasions; at any rate, the Customs officials were apparently quite satisfied, and they, no doubt, are excellent judges in these matters.

As a matter of fact, some one, who was probably an even greater expert, appeared to have gone through it on the boat; for Adrienne, who by instruction carried it unlocked and had left it for a moment or two in the saloon, found that the contents had been turned over, and this gave her a distinctly unpleasant sensation, which was not improved when

she observed that she was being shadowed from the quay to the small hotel to which she had been directed to make her way.

She had been warned that the place swarmed with German spies, agents provocateurs, and the sort of international race-course riff-raff which collects in neutral countries on the fringes of the war zone, and lives by its wits on the misfortunes of others. Her instructions were to stay there until some one arrived, whom she would know by the fact that he or she would present her with a pin; and she was to trust no one else.

If the worst came to the worst, she might apply for help to a certain gentleman, but this should be avoided if possible.

Time hung heavy on her hands, and the fact that she was constantly watched began to get on her nerves; for, by looking into plate-glass windows and by suddenly retracing her steps, she caught frequent glimpses of the man who had followed her from the boat, and who now appeared to have taken up his abode in the same hotel.

One morning, when she was sitting in the lounge after her morning *café-au-lait*, a smartly-dressed Belgian planted himself near her, and entered into conversation. He was waiting for his passes to be viséd for England, where his family already were—and what was she doing? Was she also going to England? If so, they might be fellow-passengers.

Adrienne replied, as instructed, that she was waiting for her grandmother, who was hoping to get a pass from the Germans to come out of France. If the old lady did not arrive soon, she supposed she would have to try and get permission to go in, but she did not know whether there was any chance of its being granted. The man then hinted that there were ways of getting in and out without any such permission, and finally whispered to her, "Have you tried ——?" mentioning the name of the man to whom she had been instructed to go as a last resort. Adrienne, now thoroughly on her guard, disclaimed any knowledge of such a person, but was quite glad to hear anything her kind friend could tell her about him, which he proceeded to do at some length, but under a strict promise of secrecy, which she solemnly swore to observe.

She gathered that if she was prepared to work for the Allies, the person in question would certainly be able to get her across the frontier, and pass her on to where her grandmother lived, by means of various friends on the other side. Adrienne thanked him for his kind offer—for so, she said, she understood it to be,—but she had not the courage to do anything so daring, and if she could only get her grandmother safe to England, she intended to stay there till the

war was over. She only hoped that would be soon; for though it might be all right for the men, it was very hard on the unfortunate women. "Ah, well, mademoiselle," said he, as rather crestfallen he left her, "yours is not a very heroic point of view, and one which fortunately is not shared by the majority of your country-women; but no doubt it is a wise one." Adrienne did not need his assurance on this point, for she thought that he might be a German *agent provocateur*, and hoped that she had seen the last of him.

But she was not to be left in peace, for another man approached her on the following day, but in quite a different manner. He had apparently found out all about her having come from England, which, of course, she did not attempt to deny; but he also knew apparently that she had been repatriated from Lille some time previously. This was rather disturbing, but when he went on to hint that the Germans could put their hand on her sister Lucille, the announcement did not quite have the devastating effect which he evidently expected, as Adrienne thereby knew that the enemy was unaware that the real Valèrie was still in Lille and had never left it.

Whilst she fenced with his questions, she was thinking rapidly whether she should make a clean breast of her connection with Lörrach. If she did so, they might let her go to France, but it was far more likely that they would either send her straight to Lörrach or would want her to return to England for them at once, using the pretext with the British authorities that she had been unable to get across the frontier. Besides, she had her instructions, and felt that she was bound to follow them, as otherwise she might upset some one else's arrangements, apart from failing to carry out her own particular mission. It was really the thought of the latter which decided her, for the plan, though attractive, was, on the whole, much too uncertain to take her to Lille; and when he asked her whether she had ever been to Lörrach, she replied that she had never heard of the place, and that even if she had, she was not in the habit of discussing such matters with perfect strangers.

Then at last he came out into the open, and said, "You need have no secrets from me; I know you have been working for the Germans, and I am doing so too; we are comrades, *hein?*"

Adrienne's hot French blood boiled, and she felt inclined to hit him in the face, but restrained herself, and merely said, "Monsieur is wasting his time; I am not working for any one, and have no intention of doing so. Even if I were, I should certainly not require the assistance of Monsieur."

At this the man completely lost his temper and snarled:

"Then you decline my assistance and refuse to go to Antwerp, where you would be well received? Idiot! You will regret your folly when 'la Dame Blonde' gets hold of you or your sister, and I promise you that your incompetent friend at Lörrach will not be able to protect you"; and he got up and stalked out of the hotel, evidently in a towering rage, leaving Adrienne considerably mystified and also a trifle amused.

However, after thinking the matter over, she came to some comforting conclusions — viz., that the fascinating gentleman at Lörrach evidently still considered her to be working for him, and that a woman at Antwerp, for some occult reason, wanted to detach her from his service—for she could hardly suppose that it was merely professional jealousy between two rival espionage centres.

She wondered what the next move would be, but was not left long in doubt, for when she went up to her room that night, and after locking the door began to undress, she discovered under her night attire an envelope, and opening it, found that it contained a slip of paper with the words "*ne fermez pas la porte*,"—and stuck through the paper was a pin. She unlocked the door, and hastily began to dress again, in some anxiety lest her visitor might arrive before the process was completed. But her fears on this score were groundless, for the unknown writer had correctly foreseen the situation in which his message might be expected to find her, and gave her ample time to rectify deficiencies. It was at least an hour later when a youngish man entered her room without any warning, and quickly shut the door behind him. Adrienne felt that the situation was distinctly embarrassing, but his business-like manner and the fact that he was obviously an Englishman, quickly reassured her, and he lost no time in coming to the first point, which was that his room was in the same passage, and that therefore they were able to meet without danger of being observed.

He had made the necessary arrangements to get her across the frontier in the company of a reliable Frenchman, who in the first instance would take her as far as Brussels, whence her onward journey to Lille would be arranged. He supposed she had still got the valves safely? and she nodded, and pointed to the suit-case, remarking, "Two complete sets." "Very good," said he; "it is not safe to take them out here, and they had better stay where they are till just before you cross the frontier, when my men will dispose of the case for you."

"But what about the other things I have brought?" she asked. "There is not very much of them, of course, for I believe the rest is already over,

but I suppose the whole lot ought to be put together somewhere?"

"That is all right, Mademoiselle; the remainder went across a long time ago, and has arrived safely at Courtrai, but, of course, it is no good without your consignment. The Belgians made rather a mess of the business, and I can't think why they left it to the last moment to get your parcel over. You had better take it on to Lille in the first instance, and arrange to send it from there to Courtrai. Are you quite confident you know the cipher?" and he took out a pencil and paper, and Adrienne, after rapidly drawing a diagram, enciphered and deciphered a few words to his complete satisfaction. Then he pulled a map out of his pocket, and asked her a series of questions, to which her replies were also apparently entirely satisfactory, for he finally folded it up again, with the remark, "Mademoiselle has evidently been completely instructed, and I congratulate her on her intelligence."

It was midnight when he got up to go, his parting remark being, "Don't forget—10.30 A.M. to-morrow at the station, and look out for a man in a brown squash hat with a black ribbon, and a small feather in the left-hand side of it; also he will have black boots, with one brown and one black bootlace. You will wear a flower and carry your suit-case in your left hand. Here's your ticket. Please turn out your light whilst I go."

A sudden thought struck Adrienne. "Would Monsieur do me a favour?" she asked. "If anything should happen to me, I promised a friend that I would let him know. In that case could I send Monsieur a message for him? If so, how should I address it?"

He thought for a moment, and then he wrote down a few words, saying, "I most sincerely trust that the necessity will not arise, but if you send a letter to this address, it will not compromise you, even if the Germans do see it, provided that you are careful what you say; but I need hardly instruct you on that point."

"My friend's address is in this envelope," replied Adrienne, "and perhaps Monsieur will do me the favour not to open it unless it should be necessary. I am deeply grateful to Monsieur." The latter began to fidget as he said, "Well, good night, Mademoiselle; that will be all right"; and then, touched apparently by the human note which her last request had introduced into an otherwise purely business discussion, he added with real feeling, "I wish you the very best of luck, and cannot say how much we all appreciate your courage and self-sacrifice. So long as France produces women like you, how can she ever be beaten!" and then, as if ashamed at his own emotion, he hurriedly left, be-

fore Adrienne could thank him or even turn out the light. The charming smile, with which she was beginning to do so, still lingered for some time after the door had closed,—as she thought to herself—how like an Englishman! how like my Archer! full of the kindest thoughts, but horribly ashamed of himself if he ever allows them to appear on the surface; what dear funny people! And the soft smile recurred at intervals, until she finally dropped off to sleep.

CHAPTER XXII.—ADRIENNE CROSSES THE FRONTIER.

Two evenings later a party of four men and one girl might have been seen in a little white-washed room in a village to the south-west of Breda, busily engaged in carrying out a surgical operation on Adrienne's suit-case. After cutting carefully round the edges on the inside they lifted out a false bottom, disclosing what looked like four small electric-light bulbs, carefully packed in cotton-wool, together with several yards of thin rope, some small metal tubes, and half a dozen flat metal discs.

"We must divide these equally between us," said the girl, "so that if anything happens to either of us, the other can go on. In that case the survivor will hand over his portion to 'le Curé' at Lille," —and she proceeded to give one of the men very exact indications as to where the old priest lived. "Where shall we meet if we get separated?" and it was finally decided that the rendezvous should be in Brussels, at the address indicated by the officer who had come to her room at Rotterdam; but whilst the man was to wait for Adrienne for two days, the latter would proceed as rapidly as possible to Lille, as she had secret instructions for "le Curé," which were to be imparted to no one else, and this for very excellent reasons, which will be appreciated later.

Adrienne hid the bulbs in the bosom of her dress and made a parcel of the other articles, which she put in her coat pocket, and the man with the ill-assorted bootlaces stowed his away also. All preliminaries having been arranged, the party waited till darkness, as the Dutch frontier police could not be relied upon not to arrest them, either on real suspicion of smuggling or because they were paid to help the Germans, and then they cautiously made their way down the road towards the frontier, one man carrying a wooden frame about three feet square. After a time they left the road, and proceeded across the fields.

Whether the enemy felt confidence in the deterrent qualities of the electrified fence, or whether their terrific losses at Arras and Messines had forced

them to economise in men is uncertain, but, whatever the reason, Adrienne was rather surprised to observe no signs of the searchlights which had nearly cost Jean his life. To her whispered inquiry one of her companions assured her that they were quite close to the fence, and that with luck they might get over before the lights were turned on. Shortly afterwards he motioned her to take shelter behind some low bushes, and the three men went on to scout, leaving her in charge of the square frame, to the outer edge of which were fixed a series of grooved rubber blocks.

It is idle to deny that the darkness and the memory of Jean's experiences combined to frighten the brave girl, and a heavy shower of rain did not tend to improve matters. It was a relief when the men returned, and her friend with the boot-laces, who answered to the name of Jules, motioned to her to follow him. They proceeded across a series of drainage cuts, running through alternating patches of soaking lucerne and standing corn; and at last Jules stopped behind a bush, and pointed to their front, whispering, "the fence!" By straining her eyes, Adrienne could dimly make out the obstacle which had been so graphically described to her by Jean, and knowing what she did, it sent a chill down her back.

The two men crawled forward with the frame, Jules and Adrienne following, and they all lay down some twenty yards from the fence, listening intently. It gradually became evident to Adrienne that they had correctly bisected the interval between two pickets, and after a short halt they all crept forward to the middle point between two of the uprights of the fence. The two men fitted the grooves on the upper rubber pads against the second strand from the bottom, and gently raised the frame until the pads on the lower edge of the frame could be slipped over the bottom strand, when Jules, whispering, "Come along and mind your skirt," crawled forward, and stepped through the insulated gap formed by the frame.

The advice as regards her skirt was unnecessary, for Adrienne had already slipped it off, not wishing to get it covered with mud, since she might have to appear in it in daylight next morning. Carrying it over her arm, she stepped quickly through, and lay down alongside him. The two men stealthily removed the frame, and took it back a short distance; then they separated, one going to each of the nearest sentries with a view to creating a diversion, and attracting attention whilst their friends got away. They had no difficulty in doing so by mentioning the fascinating subject of butter, fat, and tobacco, which they were prepared to part with at bargain prices, provided that the Germans would look

the other way when some Belgians escaped into Holland the following night.

This naturally started what promised to develop into an interminable argument, but unfortunately one of the picket commanders intervened, and said that unless the Belgian cleared off at once it would be the worse for him. The man withdrew a short distance, and then perhaps with the idea of continuing the diversion, but more probably out of bravado —for like most Belgians he could not resist the temptation to get some of his own back from the hated enemy in such favourable circumstances,—he commenced to hurl every kind of abuse at the Germans, both in their own language and his own. This was too much for them. The picket commander lost his temper, and, strictly against all orders, opened a fusilade into the darkness in his direction, on which the Belgian retired with remarkable alacrity, and the worthy *Landstürmers* gradually recovered their equanimity and settled down again.

In the meantime Adrienne and Jules had safely crossed the dangerous hundred yards between the two fences, and Adrienne, laying her skirt over the barbed-wire on the far side, had got through without any damage either to her shapely ankles or well-cut blue serge knickers.

The country beyond was very difficult to negotiate owing to the water channels, and in spite of Adrienne's agility they made slow progress, until finally Jules decided to get back as quickly as possible on to the poplar-lined road about a quarter of a mile to their right—for they had ten miles to cover if they were to reach safety before daylight.

Travelling in this direction, they made better progress, as they were proceeding between two parallel channels, and they finally crossed the formidable canal, which lined the road, by a small bridge close to a farm-house. They went cautiously along the road towards it, Adrienne following Jules, at his request, at about one hundred yards' interval, so that he could give her warning of any danger; for they agreed her mission was the more important of the two, and that she had less chance of getting away if it came to sheer running. He was actually past the farm when the sound of heavy firing was heard in the direction from which they had come, the reason of which we already know. Adrienne stopped for a second, and just as she had made up her mind to make a dash past the farm, a party of Germans who formed the inlying picket of the outposts on the frontier came hurrying out, wheeling bicycles, and effectively cutting her off from Jules.

She could not get across the canals at the side, nor was there any chance of escaping from the cyclist by running back along the road; in fact,

she knew that she was fairly caught. The only chance was to get behind a tree at the side, and she started to make a dart for the nearest. But she was too late, for one of the men shouted out "Halt!" and dropping his bicycle ran towards her. At the same moment she tripped over a fallen branch, and fell on her face in the grass at the side. Quick as thought she threw the packet in her pocket in the canal, but she had not time to get rid of the wireless valves before the man reached her, his rifle half raised as if he was going to shoot; and as she rolled over on her back and sat up, she looked down the barrel into the face of a ferocious-looking Hun.

"All right," she said in French—"don't look so fierce; I'm a friend. Raise your rifle, and then I can get up, for this grass is horribly wet. I want to see your Commanding Officer."

As the other men came up she got on to her feet, and in her knickers and blue coat and tight-fitting velvet toque, they thought at first it was a youth, until one of the men turned a torch on to her. "*Gott im Himmel!*" he exclaimed, "*ein Mädchen!*" and to her embarrassment he proceeded to examine her up and down with his torch, punctuated with what she gathered to be expressions of marked approval from the other men, who had crowded round her. Then he seized her arm, saying, "Come along! the Lieutenant will be highly pleased with such a fine prize."

"Let go my arm," said Adrienne with dignity, "and kindly allow me to put on my skirt, which is somewhere here in the grass, before we proceed any farther." The man only laughed, and one of the others picked up her skirt and put it over his arm, remarking in German, to the great amusement of the others, "I think the *Herr Oberleutnant* will prefer to see her just as she is!" Further resistance was useless, so she accepted the situation, and was conducted into the parlour of the farm, where a sleepy-looking German, with a great-coat inadequately covering an untidy déshabille, got up out of an easy-chair in front of the fire to receive his fair prisoner, who was led in between two men. "Good heavens!" said he, "what on earth is a girl like you doing out at this time of night—and in such an extraordinary costume? Up to no good, I'll guarantee," and he grinned sardonically as he looked her up and down.

"If Monsieur will send out these men, I will promise not to hurt him, but I will answer no questions until I get back my skirt—and I have information which will greatly interest the German authorities."

The officer issued some curt orders, and one of the men went out, returning with the skirt, which he handed rather sheepishly to Adrienne.

"We have not searched her yet, *Herr Leutnant*," said the *Unteroffizier* hopefully—"would you not wish us to do so?"

"No!" shouted the Lieutenant. "I will do anything that is necessary—clear out! Go up to the lines at once and find out what all the firing was about. Do you think that half a dozen men are required to escort one girl? Any excuse to avoid your duty, you lazy hounds!"

Adrienne had lost no time in donning the lost garment, and when the men had gone, said, "I am tired and wet; has Monsieur le Lieutenant any objection to my sitting down? German officers do not usually keep ladies standing—at least that is not my experience."

Her coolness rather abashed the German, and he hastily got up and indicated a chair on the other side of the hearth, which she pulled forward, and stretched out her wet feet and ankles towards the fire, whilst he regarded her with ever-increasing interest. "Well," said he, after a pause, "perhaps you will explain what you are doing here, and show me your permission to be within the prohibited area."

"I have no papers," she replied quietly, "for the simple reason that I have just come across the frontier; your sentries are no good at all, and I expect you will get into trouble if I tell Headquarters about it. Your arrangements are infantile, and I wonder that there is any one left in Belgium!"

She could see that this bold offensive had rather taken him aback, for he at once began to bluster, threatening all kinds of penalties if she was impertinent, at the same time stamping up and down the room.

"Gently," said Adrienne; "please do not get excited. My nerves will not stand any more noise. I do not want to get Monsieur into trouble if he is reasonable, and treats me with the courtesy and respect to which I am accustomed."

"Ha! ha!" laughed the German. "That's very good from a hussy caught roaming about the frontier at night, looking like a dancing-girl from a cabaret"; but his laugh sounded forced and nervous, and he was evidently far from sure of his ground. "What was this valuable information you talked about just now? Come, let's have it!"

"I was going to tell Monsieur, when he interrupted me, that I am an agent working for the German Army."

"Then why *in Gottes Namen* did you cross the frontier *en fraude* and risk being shot, when you could have got a pass from the Germans for the asking?" said he. "That's a very likely story!"

"Well, Monsieur may believe it or not as he pleases, but I have no time to waste, as I must be getting on to Antwerp, where they are expecting me.

You keep me here at your own risk. If you will lend me a bicycle I will hand it over to the German authorities there" —and, she added, smiling, "I will also do the best I can for you in regard to my getting through your sentries so easily."

The smile was a tactical error, as Adrienne soon found out, for it served to restore the German's waning confidence, and he got up and came towards her, saying, "Not quite so fast, young woman; I'm in no hurry to part with you, and shall have to know a good deal more about you before I do so. At present I find your explanations very far from satisfactory"; and then, looking at the well-shaped ankles stretched out to the fire, he continued, "I'll wager that you never came across the frontier, and I believe that you are an actress from an Antwerp or Brussels music-hall. I can make a pretty good guess what you were looking for. Anyway, he's not here, and you'll have to make the best of my society for a bit. Come now, don't be silly, but let me see what you can do in the dancing line."

"Monsieur is quite mistaken; I am neither an actress nor a dancing-girl, but I *am* an agent of the German Intelligence, and Monsieur had better be careful, or he may land himself in trouble."

"Very well," replied he, "if you are not prepared to be friendly, I shall have to treat you as a suspect and search you. Shall I call in the men, or would you prefer me to do it unaided?" and without waiting for an answer he seized her coat and attempted to pull it off.

Adrienne, with a flaming face, and mindful of the two valves which still lay concealed in her bosom, sprang up and wrenched herself away from him, but as he again began to advance towards her, she decided that her only chance was to play a desperate card.

"I have told Monsieur the truth as far as the German authorities permit me. If I now disclose secrets which I should not do, the responsibility rests on Monsieur. I see you have a telephone there; please ring up Lörrach, and say that L. 139 has arrived from Holland, and requests that orders be given at once for her to proceed to Brussels *viâ* Antwerp."

The man hesitated, and Adrienne for a moment thought that she had carried her point, but her hopes were dashed to the ground when he replied, "Lörrach is a long way from here, and I could not get through by telephone; in any case, I do not care what they say, as they have no business to be sending people this way without letting us know beforehand. I don't take any orders from them; but if you like I will send a telegram, though I cannot possibly get an answer till midday to-morrow. As I can't watch you till then, I

will search you now to make certain that you are not carrying anything incriminating"; and he again advanced towards her.

Adrienne quickly put the table between herself and him, but she knew that this was only a temporary respite, and in desperation drew a bow at a venture, not really hoping for any definite result. "Then ring up 'la Dame Blonde'! and touch me if you dare!" she said, and waited anxiously to see the effect.

The man pulled himself up with a jerk, and stammered out, "What do you know about her?" The girl saw that her chance shot had struck home, and with renewed courage replied, "That is my business, and I do not tell it to casual Lieutenants of *Landstürm.*" Then pressing her advantage, she continued, "Tell her that L. 139 wants a bicycle placed at her disposal at once, in order that she may report to Madame at Antwerp."

He was evidently cowed, for he went to the instrument and proceeded to ring up Antwerp. A long conversation followed in German, which Adrienne could not understand, and finally he hung up the instrument and turned to Adrienne, saying sulkily, "A car will be sent to fetch you to-morrow; in the meantime I will place a room at your disposal, and you had better go to sleep. Kindly follow me"—and he led the way upstairs, and showed her into a bedroom, the door of which he locked behind her. Then she sat down to think what was the next move, for it looked as if she had jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire unless she could escape before the car came. She went to the window, but saw that there was a big drop, and that escape by it was out of the question, but she noted that a dirty pond came almost up to the walls of the house.

Regretfully she decided that the precious valves must be sacrificed, and taking them out she wrapped them in a hearthrug, and trod them into small pieces. Then she threw the metal bases into the pond, and scattered the broken glass out of the window. She now had nothing incriminating left on her except the money in her boots, which could not be extracted except by cutting off the heels, and having decided to retain it, she wedged a chair against the door, and, thoroughly exhausted, lay down on the bed to fall into a fitful slumber.

CHAPTER XXIII.—LA DAME BLONDE.

The sun was streaming through the window when she was awakened by a hammering outside, accompanied by guttural shouts of "*Fräulein.*" On removing the chair and

opening the door she found an elderly German soldier, holding a steaming cup of coffee and some black bread and meat, which he offered her, saying that the *Herr Leutnant* was asleep, and regretting that they —the men—could not offer "*Fräulein*" better fare. Adrienne was rather touched, as it was evidently an entirely spontaneous effort on the part of the soldiers, and she thanked the envoy, at the same time asking if they had heard anything of a car which was to come for her to take her to Antwerp. Perhaps she might be permitted to go down the road to meet it, and save time?

The worthy man said he would inquire, and returned shortly after with the *Unteroffizier*, who informed her that his orders were to see that she did not leave the room until the car came—and he emphasised the point by again locking her in.

Evidently there was no way of escaping from the journey to Antwerp, and she thought deeply of what line she should take when she got there. As regards "La Dame Blonde," it was evident, firstly, that she was a person of importance, probably the head of an espionage bureau; secondly, that the man at Rotterdam had been one of her recruiting agents; and thirdly, that apparently she was not above seducing the agents employed at Lörrach, and therefore, probably not on the best terms with the latter. It followed that she might not like to make inquiries about Adrienne from Lörrach, and that it might be possible to play off one bureau against the other. This seemed to the girl to be the only chance, and she determined to try it.

Assuming that Jules had got through safely, as was probable, the one really vital matter was to get a few hours' conversation with "le Curé." She would concentrate on obtaining that and let the consequences follow, whatever they might be. She had plenty of time to consider the question from every point of view, for the day dragged on and still no car; in fact, it was not until darkness was falling that she eventually heard it arrive, and was summoned downstairs, where a man in civilian clothes, speaking perfect French, greeted her with politeness, and invited her to accompany him to Antwerp. The Lieutenant was now all servility, and evidently most anxious to remove any unpleasant impression which he might have created in Adrienne's mind; but she treated him with disdain, and did not even glance at him as she got into the car. After some efforts on the part of her companion to open conversation, which were not encouraged by the girl, they continued the drive in silence, and on approaching the town he drew down the blinds, evidently to prevent her from seeing where she was being taken. Eventually they stopped, and he pulled out a

thick veil from his pocket, telling her to put it over her face, and to follow him quickly. She did so, and passing down what was apparently a side street, they stopped outside a door in a garden wall, which he quickly opened with a private key, and they went through a small back garden and up some steps into a dark passage. The man produced an electric torch, and showed the way into a small room, lit a lamp, and told her to wait until he came back to fetch her.

Half an hour later she was shown into a big room upstairs, the luxurious appointments of which she hardly glanced at, for at the far end was a table with several telephones, and behind it a lady who could be no other than the famous "Dame Blonde."

The latter said something in German to the man, who saluted and went out, and the two were left alone. Adrienne looked at the woman with apprehensive interest, and saw that she was a big handsome woman with masses of corn-coloured hair, cold bright-blue eyes, and a very determined-looking mouth. She motioned Adrienne to a chair with the air of one accustomed to issuing commands. The latter felt that the handsome blonde was a far more formidable proposition than any of the Germans whom she had hitherto had to deal with, from the mere fact that she would be quite impervious to Adrienne's charms. The girl sat down, and waited for the other to commence operations.

"You claim to be a Lörrach agent, I understand, and state that your number is L. 139."

"That is so," said Adrienne; "and Madame will no doubt already have verified that my name is Valèrie de ——, and that I was repatriated from Lille two months ago?"

The woman did not answer Adrienne's query, but continued in an icy voice—

"What were your instructions, and why have you come back?"

"My task was to report on the English Army, which I did for five weeks; then the money stopped coming,"—and she explained how she had gone to the post office until she was afraid of falling under suspicion herself.

"Why did you not return to Switzerland?"

"I did try to, but the French refused to give me a visa, and I did not know how to get across the frontier without it. You see, Lörrach had not put me in touch with any one else in France, although I asked them to do so before I left Germany."

"Did you get good information?"

"It is not for me to say, but if Madame will consult the 'Chief' at Lörrach I think he will assure her on that point, and that I warned him of the Messines attack."

The woman asked a good many more questions of the same description, and Adrienne

answered, whenever possible, by referring her to Lörrach, which, as she noted with secret delight, evidently annoyed her interrogator considerably. The suspicion that there was no love lost between the two rival spy establishments was strengthened, as it became clearer and clearer that "La Dame Blonde" had not, and did not intend to say anything to Lörrach about the new arrival, if it could be avoided.

Finally, she came to the question of why Adrienne had come to Holland, and how she had crossed the frontier; and the girl's quick intuition, and the memory of the two men who had approached her in Rotterdam, warned her that the woman probably knew a good deal more about her movements there than she pretended. The best plan, therefore, would be to stick as closely as possible to the truth.

She explained that the English were looking for people to go back to "occupied" territory to work for them, and that she had invented a story about her grandmother in Lille, which seemed good enough to account for her wanting to go. Anyway, they had swallowed it, though apparently they had some suspicions, as she had been approached at Rotterdam by two men, one of whom had offered to help her over the frontier on behalf of the Allies. He probably was sent to see if she could keep her tongue, she suggested tentatively.

Watching the woman closely, Adrienne saw her look quickly down at the table, the ghost of a smile flitting across her face, and knew that she had guessed right in supposing that her interrogator knew all about the men.

"But they did not leave it at that," she continued, "for they actually sent an *agent provocateur* with an offer of help from the Germans to put me across the frontier—the cunning English pigs! But, of course, I spotted their object, and as they did not try again, I suppose they were satisfied."

The woman, with some warmth, replied, "But that was my man, and if you had accepted his help you would have been saved all the trouble of getting across the frontier, where you might easily have been shot."

"Yes," said Adrienne, "and never have been able to go back to England again without being arrested as a spy! for, of course, the English would have found out how I got across. I cannot congratulate Madame on her agent, for he lost his temper and made all kinds of threats on your behalf, which was so stupid that I felt more than ever convinced he was working for the English."

"Well, then, how did you get over the frontier?"

Adrienne explained more or less accurately how she had got across, substituting a hinged plank laid over the fence for the insulated frame, as she

thought that the latter method might still be unknown to the Germans; but she professed to be unable to give any clear description of the people who had arranged it all, or rather her description was quite unrecognisable; and, of course, she suppressed all mention of the fact that Jules had crossed with her. To her delight, this was accepted without comment, which looked as if Jules was still at large.

She went on to describe how she had made her way at once to the main road, hoping to find a picket to which she could report, but the supervision on the frontier was so excellent that she had been stopped before she got there. (She would have liked to have said just the reverse, so as to be even with the Lieutenant, but refrained in the interests of others who might wish to follow her example.)

The woman cross-examined her closely, but naturally failed to find any flaw in the story, for it was practically true so far as she was in a position to verify it.

Eventually Adrienne thought that the time was ripe to make the request to which she had been gradually leading up—viz., that she should at once be sent on to report to her master at Lörrach. To her intense joy the woman at first tried to avoid the question, and when pressed, put forward a number of reasons why it would be useless to send her there.

Could Adrienne get across the Swiss frontier again without being arrested? No; then what was the good of going there at all?

But could not her Lörrach friend send her back *viâ* Holland? urged Adrienne—the English would expect her to come that way.

The woman smiled in a superior manner, and brushed all Adrienne's remonstrances aside by arguing, firstly, that the English might find out she had been to Lörrach, and it was putting her to an unnecessary risk; and secondly, that the Antwerp Bureau was alone responsible for sending agents *viâ* Holland, of which arrangements Lörrach was well aware. She would arrange all that with her friend there; and Adrienne could have shouted for joy, for she shrewdly suspected that the woman intended quietly to appropriate what she believed to be one of the rival establishment's best agents, and to say nothing about it.

With great apparent reluctance Adrienne at length agreed that, if Lörrach had no objections, she would work for Antwerp, and the blonde lady again promised to communicate with them accordingly; but she could assure her that it would be all right.

On the assumption that Lörrach would consent, the two then discussed various details about the new mission, Adrienne insisting that she must actually go to Lille as directed

by the British, and the woman assuring her that it was quite unnecessary, as she herself could answer all the questions quite well enough to satisfy the English, and would thereby save Adrienne the journey.

The latter, however, was equally firm as to the necessity for going there herself, pointing out with some justice that the English had only to confront her with a recent *repatrié* to catch her out on some point of detail about recent events in the town, which would prove she had not been there. She explained, with her tongue in her cheek, that "La Dame Blonde" would have known at once if she had attempted to lie to her, and though, of course, the English were comparatively stupid, it was no use running unnecessary risks.

The woman obviously did not like it, but eventually said that she would think it over, and meantime Adrienne must give the names of relations, so that her statements could be verified. Knowing as she did from the man who had accosted her in Holland that "La Dame Blonde" already knew about Lucille, Adrienne had to give her name. The woman then uttered a very serious warning. If she played false, Adrienne would surmise what was likely to happen to her sister—and she looked at Adrienne with her cold blue eyes in a manner which sent a shiver down the girl's back. At last the interview was over, for "La Dame Blonde" said, "Now you will be searched, and then you can go to bed," and she rang the bell.

A hard-faced German woman appeared, who took Adrienne to a bedroom, and there directed her to undress, herself superintending the process. Then she carefully examined her belongings, and finally departed with all her clothes, except her boots, leaving her a night-robe in exchange.

Adrienne expected she would come back for the boots in any case, so she called out, "Wait a minute! you have forgotten my boots; don't you want to look at them?" on which they, too, were removed—but the girl felt confident that they would resist any examination short of actual destruction, and she was right.

Three days later, armed with all the necessary passes, she left Antwerp by train for Lille, where she immediately proceeded to the *Kommandantur*, as ordered, and reported her arrival. Then she went to the big house, to receive a rapturous welcome from the astonished Léonie, who not being altogether in the know, had never expected to see her again. Adrienne's first question was about Valèrie, and her heart sank when the faithful retainer, with tears in her eyes, replied, "Very, very ill; the doctor says there is no hope, and that my poor mistress may pass away at any moment; if you have any messages from her mother, there is no time to be lost."

Adrienne suspected that she herself was under close observation, but she had foreseen this possibility, and had mentioned to "La Dame Blonde" that it would look very suspicious if she did not visit the convent to see "Sister Marie," who had nursed her during the severe illness, as the result of which she had been repatriated, and that lady had quite agreed.

She therefore lost no time in starting off, and as she left the house she noticed that a man, who had been idling about, turned and followed her at a distance. She rang the bell outside the great door, and a face peered at her through the grating; then the door was swung open, and a sister greeted her with evident surprise and pleasure.

When she arrived by the bedside she was shocked to observe the change in Valèrie, who was lying in a state of semi-consciousness, but the poor girl recognised her friend at once, and made a great effort to welcome her. The nurse begged her patient to be calm, and Adrienne gave her the messages which she had brought from her mother. She tried to fence with Valèrie's requests for news of her brothers, but she would not be put off, and Adrienne at last broke to her the sad news that her soldier brother had been very severely wounded in Champagne. The poor girl gasped, and then whispered, "Did you bring the wireless apparatus?" Adrienne, seeing the anxiety on her face lest her sacrifice should have been in vain, stretched a point and replied, "Yes, dear Valèrie; thanks to you, everything is here, and all is well. France will not forget."

When "le Curé" arrived shortly afterwards he found the two girls crying softly by the bedside of the dead.

"This is no time for crying, my child," said he gently, placing his hand on Adrienne's head. "Our dear sister is at peace, and for us who remain there is work to be done. Jules arrived yesterday with the equipment, and told us how you had been captured; he also said you had weighty matters of which to tell me. We must not let our sorrows interfere with our duties."

"Forgive me, Father," replied Adrienne, regaining her self-control; "but I fear that the joy of seeing me again, and the news which I brought, hastened her end—and I had hoped that it would have been so different! But you are right; there is no time to lose, for I have to return to Antwerp to-morrow, and I have much to tell you. If only I could have stayed myself to see the matter through!"

Then an idea struck her. Surely the hand of Providence had timed her arrival at the very moment of Valèrie's death, in order that the poor girl might regain her own identity, and be put to rest in a manner befitting her unselfish life. The way seemed so clearly indicated

that she wondered that it had not occurred to her before.

"Father, from this moment I must again become Sister Marie. Send some one to warn Léonie, and then inform the *Kommandantur* that Valèrie de ——, just returned from England, has unexpectedly been attacked by her old malady, and has died suddenly from heart failure. Here are my papers to show them, and every one in Lille will vouch for it that the corpse is that of the real Valèrie. Unless they send some one from Antwerp or Lörrach who knows me well, the Germans cannot possibly find out what has actually happened, provided the doctor is loyal to us, and we surely can trust him."

She spoke in the *exalté* manner of one inspired, and in view of her confidence a decision was soon taken. "Le Curé" himself went out into the road, and hailed the first man he saw, who naturally was the watcher, and asked him to go at once to the *Kommandantur* to inform the authorities that a visitor had died suddenly. The man was evidently loath to go, but when he heard the name and was shown her passes, he wasted no further time but set off as hard as he could go, taking the papers with him.

Meantime, within the convent the corpse was being rapidly dressed in Adrienne's clothes, and removed to one of the reception rooms, whilst the doctor and Léonie, who had been summoned, were duly primed as to what they were to say.

When the German officials arrived an hour later, they found the faithful servant kneeling beside the body of her dead mistress, weeping with an abandonment of grief too deep to be simulated, and the evidence which they laboriously wrote down as to the sudden seizure and heart failure, following on the long and trying journey, was so conclusive as to admit of no doubt. In suitable terms they expressed their regret, but directed that the funeral should not take place until permission was given. Then they went away, and drew up an elaborate report, which duly reached "La Dame Blonde" the following evening.

Perhaps she ought to have sent one of her jackals to view the body, but she did not do so, for she was on rather delicate ground in the matter. She had no objection to suborning an agent from another Service, provided that there was no chance of being found out. But now that the girl was dead, the less interest she appeared to take in her the better, and in her reply to Lille she made it quite clear that, so far as she was concerned, they could bury her at once—and she did not mention Lörrach.

Unfortunately, as an afterthought and some days later, it occurred to her that she might cover up her shady

actions more artistically and at the same time acquire merit, so she wrote a full account of Adrienne's arrival to the gentleman at Lörrach, stating that she had given her permission to stop a few days at Lille to see her people, pending the receipt of orders from him. If he would communicate his instructions to the *Kommandantur* there, they would be delivered to her. She herself was very glad to have been able to help her brother-in-arms, though in future it would be safer to let her know beforehand when he proposed to send people into her area; he could rely on her, &c.—all of which the recipient no doubt appreciated at its proper value; but he took early steps to get into touch with the brightest jewel in his collection, the charming and invaluable L. 139.

Being, however, a man who prided himself on his knowledge of French psychology, he decided to give the lady in the case a pleasant surprise, his line of argument being that she had been away amongst her own people for some time, and might well have formed a new attachment. It would obviously be wise to give her a short refresher course of her old German lover, so as to renew her enthusiasm for the cause of the Fatherland. Needless to say, he had never seen the individual in question!

The result of his endeavours was that the "Town Major," in the squalid village to which he had been relegated in disgrace, one morning received an official envelope, informing him that he was granted ten days' leave to proceed to Lille to meet a lady named Valèrie de ——, who was waiting for him there. His expenses would be paid by the German Intelligence through the *Kommandantur*, where further instructions were awaiting him.

The elderly *roué* was tickled to death at the idea of the German Staff arranging a rendezvous for him, and in his comments on the subject, he can claim to have forestalled our most successful recruiting poster—"See the world, and get paid for doing it." He congratulated himself on not having denied the acquaintance of the fair unknown, when he had been taxed with it on a previous occasion; and the fact that he had not the faintest idea, who the lady was, did not in the least disturb him. It merely confirmed his own opinion that he was irresistible to the fair sex—with a few annoying exceptions such as that insolent minx at "X" (meaning Adrienne); curse her!

(*To be continued.*)

AS BEFITS MY POSITION.

BY MRS SAMUEL PEPYS.

(BEING EXTRACTS FROM HER DIARY.)

THIS day my husband did talk to me for my good, a thing I hate, and always makes me want to do the contrary, for which God forgive me. Amongst other things, said that now we be come to such high estate I must hold myself aloft and not be seen abroad in such low company, by which I know he do mean my dear Peg Woffat. He likes her not because she is ugly and hath a splay foot; but her heart is of gold, and she hath a fish-kettle twice as big as mine that I can have when I will, and now we do give such great dinners it serveth me well. Also she is a devout woman, and wise, and I do set store by her counsel and company. And her husband is a very fine man, though common.

This day my husband to his office, and I to Peg Woffat, consulting with her about my old taffeta petticoat, whether to put new lace on it or no. I did tell her something of my husband's talk about our changed condition, and she have put in my mind that I ought to have a waiting-maid of mine own, to take about with me as all the fine ladies do: saying that a willing, good, plain girl of some breeding (but not too much) would save me more trouble than she would make in the house, and would give me much pleasure and dignity, the which I will bring my husband to if I can.

July 13th, 1660.—This day my husband did show me his new patent as Clerk of the Acts of the Navy, a beautiful great parchment all signed and sealed, whereby he is sure of his post. We are to have an Officiall Residence at the Navy Office, and the Head of that Office is His Royal Highness the Duke of York, Lord High Admirall and present heir to the Crown. So if my husband can win favour no advancement is too great for him to hope for. He hath already the title of Esquire, and many who were formerly much above us in station do now come to him cap in hand, hoping for advancement.

This day my husband did bring home the 'Life of Lord Bacon of Verulam,' Lord Chancellor of England in the days of our King's grandfather, James I. of blessed memory, and did read aloud to me of his trial in Westminster Hall; which set us seriously to thinking how easily a man may slip

from just and honourable receiving of presents in consideration of services rendered to the depths of bribery and corruption, from which the good God preserve us! I did promise my husband most faithfully never to receive any gift from any person whatsoever without having first his full knowledge and consent. Therewith I did, to tease him, make great confession of a present I did lately receive from a sailor-man through W. Hewer; and did beat about the bush for long, seeming afraid to tell him of how great value it was, or from whom it might have come, till at last, he growing really angry, I did let him know it was but a pill for me to give our monkey next time he fall sick. They be pills that all sailor-men have by them, so he did tell me, and give one to a small monkey like ours, two to a large one, and three to a man, but to the cabin-boys one or two according to their age and size; and they do bring a store of them as oft as they do go to the East Indies, from which place they do come. The which when my husband had understood, he rebuked me, saying, I should have got three from the sailor-man, in sort that he could have tried the remedy himself, doubting not that it would bring him much comfort.

Up very early this day to go with my husband in the Navy Barge to Woolwich, with Lady Batten and her maid, I very vext to be so humble with no woman to attend me. But the poor wench was so afeard, the wind being very high and the water rough, that what with weeping and moaning, and crying out that we should all be drowned, and being very sick, Lady Batten poor wretch in much the same case, comforting themselves with strong waters, and breaking of a bottle of Hungary water that cost 10s., I was soon very thankful not to have brought another like encumbrance. At Woolwich my husband did carry himself with great dignity, so that indeed I scarcely knew him. But after dinner he did escape from me, and under pretext that my lady had need of me, did arrange for me to sleep with her at Woolwich, he returning to London. In the evening played cards. My lady, her maid being gone sick to bed, did seem to expect me to attend upon her, though not asking it openly, and I refrained, as befits my present position. I do hear that in the reign of our King's grandfather the Clerk of the Acts was knighted, and my husband being very high spoken of on all sides, the same may likely befall him, for the which I must be prepared.

My dear husband, poor wretch, hath made a fresh set of vows against over-much drinking, going to Plays, and other diversions. He do renew them every half year, with

a space between. Also he hath bought a poore's box to put his forfeits in. It do cost him 12d. every time after the first that he do kiss a woman, except me. I have not so weak a nature, for which I thank God, there being no harm in a kiss, beyond what foul thoughts do make of it.

Methinks I do see a way for getting my will over my husband about a waiting-maid. He hath given himself much to pleasure these days. He hath spent much money on grand new clothes for himself. Also he hath gained much money, as I do know. And he hath not forgot his vows neither, for I do hear the pence rattle into the poore's box night after night, and he do look at me sometimes like a repentant dogg. So I do think this day since he must be at home, if he do find me in my new blue Indian cotton gown and my hair well dressed, and a mighty good dinner greatly to his liking but not too dear, I may bring him to meet my desires, for indeed 'tis only fitting that I should have one.

My trouble was all for naught, my husband coming home with a coach to carry me off among his gay friends, which I should have liked well enough only I was set on having him to myself that I might get my will about the waiting-maid. When at last we come home we was both too sleepy for any profitable talk.

My husband has now repented of his late joyous courses, and do settle seriously to work and singing of psalms. This day I did speak to him of a waiting-maid, but he made answer, as I feared, that his state is not yet great enough for such an addition to his family, but he do hope, with the blessing of God, to come there in due time. He did speak of taking a little wench to help our girl, and did give me £5 to buy me a petticoat with good lace.

This day my husband did speak to me of taking his sister Paulina, for shortness called Pall, to be my waiting-maid, which vexes me much, destroying all my hopes of having a nice smart woman of my own choice.

Sister Pall do come to us in June next. She will be an aid to me in all house work and cooking, but no ornament nor gain otherwise; and dresses so bad, 'tis shame for a taylor's daughter to be so sloppy. But it seems the poor wretch did weep for joy at coming to us, promising to behave herself at all points, and to remember herself as not a sister but a servant. My husband says she shall not sit at table with us, being to be treated in all respects as a waiting-maid.

Sister Pall is come, very sweet and smiling and quite neat.

With Pall to my father Pepys' house to dress dinner, his wife being gone to the country. A great dinner and all went well, only half the pullets were old hens. Happily we discovered it in time, so I served them boyled, stufft with chestnuts and well seasoned and smothered in my white sawce that I learnt in France; and all did say it was the best dish that ever came before them on any table, and must at all costs know the cooke. Which when they had heard, and knew that it was not one to be had for hire, they were grieved. I did offer to teach it to Pall, she being now my maid.

Lord's Day. To our church, where had a good sermon on How blessed a thing it is for men to dwell together in unity. I made a vow to do my best with Pall, my husband having it much at heart that we should live so; and not spend all that money out of the family when we might do otherwise. Though indeed he spendeth more in one month on books and clothes and other such indulgences than a waiting woman would cost in a year. After dinner my husband and I with Pall and the boy and my little black dog went over the water and walked to halfway house and beyond into the fields and were very merry. My husband catched a little young rabbit no bigger than a kitten. The dog started it out of a tussock of grass and he threw his hat over it. We took it home to Minny our cat whose kits we had drowned, and she took to it in their place to our great pleasure. There we did come to a field where all were making hay; not forgetting the Lord's Day, but in very great trouble for thinking a storm was coming up and it would all be spoyled. So we all to help, my husband and I taking off our good clothes, though not our best being yet too good to work in, and leaving them behind the rick. So we came forth, I in my old taffeta petticoat off which I did pick the lace, and he in his shirt-sleeves, and so to work. Pall, poor wretch, having nothing neat inside did work in her dress as she was. And so for some hours worked as hard as ever I did in my life, very merry, a big jar of good cyder being under the hedge, in a corner, to which corner my husband's work did always bring him, till the farm people, not knowing who we were but perceiving us to be of the quality, did call him Sir Knight of the Cyder Jug. Me they called My Lady Merry Heart, for that I must always be laughing and throwing of the hay at all who came near me. And so, with great joy, all that hay being well got in, back with them to their house to supper and so home by moonlight very well pleased. At night, Pall did kiss me, saying, poor wretch, she had not had so much pleasure and merriment since the day she was born. That night a great

thunder storm, so we was glad the hay had been got in.

This day my heart was filled with a most vile jealousy for because my husband did say openly before all that Mrs P. had a finer small foot than I; and I believe it is true, which did make me hate him the more for saying it, and her for having it; for which God forgive me. Afterwards I did smack Pall, because on hearing it she grinned.

Washing day. Much hard work, but, I hope, well done, the wind being very good for drying. Early to bed, wishing to escape from Pall whose sharp tongue I like not, and there read all through the Lamentations of Jeremiah, wishing to keep myself awake that I might tax my husband with his ill speech of me. But when he come, he was so miserable for that some drunken lord, and I believe it was a very great one, had thrown a glass of clarett wine over his new best wastecote that I had no heart to scold him, but instead comforted him and put it to soke.

This day for a frolic Pall and I did prepare a very fine great Pork Pye with a fals crust made of pure flour and water, well browned, and did put in it the little young rabbit we brought home lately from the hay-field and fitted on the crust above him, he being asleep, and so served it up to my husband, saying it had been brought as a present from one who did not wish to be known. He did sit for long, wondering who could have sent him such a common thing. Then he calling for a knife, the which I had not foreseen; I did make excuses not to give it him, fearing for the rabbit inside. But he suddenly, wanting to be free, did burst up through the pye-crust, and sat there in the pye, with his ears all askew and one paw on the edge, looking at us. The poor innocent thing did seem so surprised, my husband and I did laugh till our sides aked. Then ate our own supper and so to bed, my husband laughing afresh each time he did think on it. Pall did say we was like two babies, and I thank God my husband and I do keep gay and fresh in spirit. But Pall do remind me of an ill-baked loaf, she is so thick and heavy, both in heart and head.

This morning coming in earlier than is my wont I did surprize Pall trying on my new flounced satin gown. I should have minded it less had her hands been clene.

This day I did by my husband's wish give to Pall my second best white gauze whisk and my embroidered gloves that I had for my Valentine three years back, she being to go out with us this afternoon. She did accept them before him with such show of sweetness and love

as did please us both; and then after, did flie into a tantrum with me, saying I had kept the best for my own weare and would put her to shame. My husband hearing her scream so did come in and forbad her to go with us, whereat she melted again and wept, most humbly begging my pardon, and saying to him I had provoked her: but notwithstanding all this we left her, and what she will do in the house, we being away, I know not. I trust her not, she is so sly.

This day my girl Jane left us, jalousing Pall that I did make too much difference between them. I hear she did tell Lady Batten's Nan that Pall did use to take all the best and biggest bits from the dishe, leaving her only the worst and least, and did then put her on to thinking ours a mean house where there was not enough given for all, which vexes me though I know it is not true. And what troubles me more is, to find myself such a low poor creature as to listen to the like silly tittle-tattle, the more so as there was somewhat also about my husband, which I will not set down, it troubles me too much. But I will keep it laid away in my mind, and when I do want to shame him for his good I will let him have it. Poor wretch, I know it will gall him to the quick to know what the kitchen wenches do say of him. He is a dear thing, and I do love him, faults and all. But I love not his faults nor yet that they should be spoke of. And it is time that he turned himself from youthful follies. In two years time he will be thirty. But as for that Pall, I do hate her more the better I know her. Now she will have to do all the work!

This day my husband was angered, Pall not having cleaned his boots, and saucing him for shouting at her.

This day Pall left us, going with her mother in the waggon. My husband went to see them off, but I made pretext of my cooking to stay at home. I like not to make show of love when I feel none; nor yet to be churlish. Also it ill befits my position that I should be seen in public bidding a fond farewell to folks that travel by the waggon. I hear the poor wretch did cry exceedingly. My husband, good simple man, was troubled by it, but I know what grieved her was that she should miss the fair this afternoon. Thank Heaven she is gone! No one but a man, and a young one at that, would have expected his sister to be a good servant for his wife. To-morrow comes my nice little new cook-maid, Doll; a wench with no pretensions. My husband finds her ill-looking, which troubles me not at all.

This day Doll went, she having used honey in place of mustard for my husband's

devilled goose, whereat he did flie out at her, and she at him, and so flung out of the house and home to her mother, my husband so troubled, what with having her go, and having his supper spoiled, that we did scold together all the evening.

A plague on all servants! Now it is my husband's man Will who is so proud and unruly, keeping his hat on in the house, and refusing short when I do give him an order, saying he will not be made a slave of. And the boy aping him in everything. But my husband shall hear of it.

This day gave a very pretty dinner, having hired a man-cook to dress it and got our dear old maid Ann to wait on us. O! what joy it is to give a dinner, all going smooth and easy, others doing all the work.

This day I have no more heart even to seek after a waiting woman, the whole business of housekeeping being so full of disappointment and failure. I grow thin and peaked and cross, for which God forgive me. I shall soon be an old woman, and my husband will care for me no more, nor wish to be seen with me abroad. Then will I poison myself like the mayde hard by our church, who did it, she sayd, because she liked not herself, neither anything that she did, that long time. But I will not, because my husband is not fit to be left. And though, being now past my twenty fifth birthday, I can no longer hope for the freshness of youth, yet, by the help of perriwigs and patches, I will make shift to hold on. This day my husband is gone to Portsmouth, and did refuse to take me with him.

This day my husband gave his consent to my taking a waiting woman. It has all come so quick, my brother finding her, and she being willing to come at once, and my husband taking a liking for her! She is young and handsome, very musicall to my husband's delight, and has an uncle a Justice. Had she been ill-looking or dull my husband would not have consented. So now, having my heart's desire as to my household, my husband's fortune very good, our house and all our furniture of it very fine, and ourselves in everything well provided for as befits our position, I will now end my diary, hoping, by God's blessing, that we fall not back from our present good estate.

TALES OF THE R.I.C.

V. THE R.M.

SINCE the period of Charles Lever, no book of Irish life has equalled 'Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.' in successfully portraying the character or "chat" of the true western peasant; but, at the same time, this book only shows the social side of a Resident Magistrate's life, and hardly does justice to his work in the wild parts of the South and West.

And of recent years the life led by Resident Magistrates has become more and more dangerous as the country became more and more unsettled. A D.I. can always take an escort with him, also he can go where and when he pleases; but an R.M. has to drive alone about the country, and, moreover, every one knows that at a certain hour on a certain day the R.M. will drive to a certain Petty Sessions Court, and after the Court is over he must drive home, though possibly by a different road. It is one thing to face death with half a score of rifles at your back, and quite a different tale unarmed and alone.

Soon after Blake came to Ballybor, the R.M. stationed there retired on pension, and in his place there came a young man, Anthony Mayne, who had served with distinction in an Irish regiment during the war. Being unmarried, Mayne took up his quarters in a small hotel close to the police barracks, and in a short time struck up a friendship with Blake.

In addition to attending at Ballybor Petty Sessions once a week, Mayne had to go to several other small towns twice a month. The district was very large, chiefly wild mountainous country, and some of the places were many miles from Ballybor, one place in particular, Ballyrick, being over thirty miles away on the shores of the Atlantic.

The first Court which Mayne attended happened to be at Ballyrick, probably one of the wildest and most thinly populated districts in Ireland. Soon after leaving Ballybor the road crossed a railway line by a level crossing close to the sea, and then ran for many miles between the sea and a chain of mountains to the small seaside town of Ballyrick.

Mayne found that the people of this district were a race of small men; they looked as though the terrific Atlantic gales had stunted them in the same way as the trees are stunted on this coast, and, moreover, their faces were not pleasing. During his first Court here the nature of the cases showed plainly that the chief amusement of the peasants was

to beat and batter each other on all opportunities, especially on dark nights after a fair, and the distillation of illicit whisky their chief occupation.

In Ireland the penalty for harbouring, keeping, or concealing a still or illicit spirits is £100, which can be mitigated to £6, luckily no lower; and from time immemorial the custom of the shopkeeper class of magistrate has always been to reduce every fine to the minimum, with the natural result that the peasants have come to regard the £6 fine as the legal penalty for the bad luck of being caught by the police. £6 is a mere fraction of the profits of a successful brew of poteen, and is looked upon in the light of a tax paid to the Government.

In one case a man was caught red-handed by the police with fourteen barrels of treacle, 200 gallons of wash, a complete still, and enough poteen to stock a fair-sized public-house. The man brought the £6 into Court with him, being certain he would be convicted and fined the usual amount.

But Mayne, the only magistrate on the bench, took a very serious view of the case, knowing the amount of crime and misery caused by this abominable drink, and fined the man £50.

Such a sentence had never been heard in Ballyrick Courthouse within the memory of man; even the police received a shock, and a noise resembling a swarm of angry bees arose to defy the shouts of the police for silence and order. That evening, when Mayne returned to Ballybor, he was followed by a police car for many miles, but the peasants had not had time to organise their revenge.

About this time the magistrates of the district received letters from the I.R.A. calling upon them to resign their Commissions of the Peace, and giving them a time limit. The shopkeeper and farmer class, being threatened with that savage scourge in Ireland, a boycott, had no alternative but to resign, which they did at once with great promptness and unanimity. In most cases the gentry hung on to their commissions, but refrained from appearing on the Bench at a time when their presence might have made all the difference.

Very soon the Sinn Fein Courts in the Ballybor district were in full swing; the country people received orders not to appear at a Petty Sessions Court, and in a very short time every Petty Sessions clerk found himself completely idle. However, as a matter of form, Mayne attended every Court regularly, though the only people present were the police, the clerk, and himself, and their only work to say good-day to each other.

By now all the magistrates in the district had either resigned or feared to attend, and if only the R.M. could be frightened out of the country or removed, all Petty Sessions Courts would be closed, and

the King's Writ would cease to run in the country both figuratively and in reality. With this end in view, the Volunteers began to send threatening letters to Mayne, and on two occasions he was fired at when motoring back from holding Courts in outlying towns.

However, Mayne was made of the right stuff, and determined that as long as he was alive the usual Courts should be held throughout his district, no matter whether the people brought their cases to the King's Courts or to the Sinn Fein Courts, which were generally held the day before a Petty Sessions Court was due in a town; and in order to provide cases he arranged with Blake to carry out a poteen raid on a large scale in the Ballyrick district, and that the cases should be tried at the next Court there. Blake duly carried out the raid, which was most successful, and the defendants were summoned to appear in Court, with the threat of arrest held over their heads if they did not turn up.

On the day of the Ballyrick Court Mayne set out, alone as usual, on his long drive about 9.45 A.M., and on reaching the level crossing found the gates closed, though no train was due to pass for several hours. After sounding his horn in vain, he went to open them himself, only to find that both gates were heavily padlocked.

He then made his way to the crossing-keeper's house, which was about fifty yards up the line. The man's wife, who was the only occupant of the house, told him that the gates had been locked that morning by the Volunteers, after the police cars had passed through, and the keys taken away. Determined not to be beaten, Mayne now got a heavy stone, and had actually succeeded in smashing the padlock on the near gate, when he was shot in the head from behind, and at once collapsed on the road.

During the late war extraordinary cases were known of men shot through the head, even through the brain, living for hours afterwards, though generally unable to speak; and Mayne, though paralysed, was quite conscious when his murderers came up to where he was lying.

For some time the murderers argued whether they should finish him off, or remove him as he was. In the end they put him into his own car, unlocked the far gate, and drove off in the direction of Ballyrick.

After proceeding about a mile they came to a lane, which led up to a lonely farm close to the sea. After driving up to the farm they threw Mayne—still alive and conscious—on to a manure heap at the back of the farmhouse, and then drove off. It was afterwards found that they then took the car to a high cliff and ran it over the edge, to be broken up on the rocks below in the sea.

Mayne spent the rest of that

day lying on the manure heap, and so terrorised were the inhabitants of the farm that not one of them dared go near him. To give poor Mayne even a cup of cold water would have meant certain death to the giver.

Late that evening the murderers returned, expecting to find Mayne dead by now; but he was still alive, though in a pitiable state. Again they argued among themselves whether they would finish him off or not, and again for some unknown reason they decided not to. And these are the men who, according to an English paper (thank God! not an Irish one), are "entitled to the treatment which, in *civilised* countries, is given to prisoners of war."

After some time an ass was harnessed to a cart, into which they threw Mayne's body, and then proceeded to the sea-shore below the farm. Here, after another discussion, they buried him—still alive, though quite paralysed—up to his neck in the sand, at a place where they thought the incoming tide would just reach him and slowly drown him during the night-time. It was now several hours since Mayne had been shot, and one can only hope that, though he was still alive, his senses had become numbed.

The following morning these fiends returned again to find that they had miscalculated the height of the tide, which had only reached the level of poor Mayne's chin, and that he was *still alive*, though probably by now quite mad. They then dug him up, and this time made no mistake, but buried him where the tide was bound to drown him. And the next flood tide put an end to a torture the like of which Lenin and Trotsky could hardly exceed for sheer malignant devilry.

Blake and a strong escort of police had motored out to Ballyrick ahead of Mayne, in case there might be an ambush on the road. The Court was due to begin at twelve, and when by two there was no sign of the R.M., Blake left for Ballybor, making inquiries on the way, but could get no tidings of him anywhere.

On arriving in Ballybor, Blake wired for a force of Auxiliaries, who arrived that night, and at once started with Blake and a strong force of R.I.C. to hunt the countryside for Mayne; but nowadays in Ireland, so dangerous is it for any civilian to be seen speaking to a policeman, that it is always quite impossible to obtain any direct information. People who had seen Mayne set out on his last ill-fated drive denied that they even knew him by sight.

For three days and three nights they scoured the countryside from Ballybor to Ballyrick, and from Ballyrick back again to Ballybor, but no clue or tidings of Mayne could they get. From the time Mayne left Ballybor, R.M. and car seemed to have disappeared as though

the earth had opened and swallowed them.

As there was no evidence of foul play, the police hoped that the R.M. had been kidnapped and hidden away in the mountains to the east of Ballyrick. So they posted notices throughout the district to the effect that, if the R.M. was returned in two days all would be well, but if not——

At the end of the two days' grace a man, who said he kept the railway crossing on the road to Ballyrick, arrived on a bicycle at the barracks ashen with fear, and asked to see Blake. On hearing the man's story, Blake went out to the level crossing and there found poor Mayne's body in a rough wooden box, lying on the side of the line. The cause of death appeared obvious; but they were greatly puzzled to find the clothes soaked with sea-water and full of sand, and to hear from the doctor who examined the body that death was due to—drowning.

The level-crossing man was detained at the barracks, and every means was taken to extract information from him; but he denied all knowledge of the murder, and proved an alibi to Blake's satisfaction.

The police spent the next fortnight searching in vain for Mayne's murderers, and it is probable that, but for a curious trait in the peasant's character, they would never have solved the mystery.

Late one evening, about three weeks after the murder, a typical Ballyrick peasant arrived at the barracks in Ballybor and asked to see the D.I., and refused to state his business except to the D.I. Luckily the police decided to admit the man, and he was led off to Blake's office.

When he was brought in Blake was up to his eyes in official correspondence, with the prospect of an all-night sitting before him; but hoping that the man might have news of Mayne, he ordered the police to leave the man alone with him, and then waited for him to tell his news.

If a western peasant has a favour to ask or a confession to make, he will talk of everything and everybody except the object of his visit, possibly for an hour and probably for two, and will generally not come to the point until he is preparing to leave. The length of time required to extract the necessary information depends entirely on the skill of the interviewer.

Blake's visitor was no exception to this rule, and many an Englishman, cleverer than Blake, would have made the mistake of hurrying his man, which is always fatal; and even Blake's patience was nearly exhausted before he made his confession.

Whether the man's confession was genuine, or whether he hoped to save his skin by turning informer is not quite clear; but at any rate he confessed to Blake that he and five other men had murdered

Mayne at the level crossing, gave the full details of one of the worst atrocities which has ever been committed in Ireland, and stated as his only reason for confessing that he had not been able to sleep since the murder.

VI. AN OUTLAW.

Probably the great majority of the British public had no idea of the extraordinary situation in the south and west of Ireland during 1920, and most likely never will have. In the summer of that sinister year, when the Sinn Fein tyranny was at its height, an English newspaper sent a lady journalist over to this unfortunate country to find out what really was the matter with us, and, if possible, to give the world yet another solution of the Irish Question.

In her first letter, this lady, quite unnecessarily, told her millions of readers that she had never been in Ireland before, proceeded to relate the peculiarities of the people of Dublin and Belfast, and finished with a vivid description of the peaceful and happy condition of the country, in spite of the interested rumours put about to the contrary.

At the time when this lady journalist was discovering peaceful and happy Ireland, the power of Sinn Fein was rapidly passing from the hands of the hot-air merchants to the direct-action ruffians; in other words, Arthur Griffiths became a mere cipher, and Michael Collins the dictator of the South and West. And very soon Collins had several imitators.

Born in 1889 in the highlands of Ballyrick, Denis Joyce, after working for a few years as gillie and general boy at a shooting-lodge near Errinane, drifted to Dublin as a labourer, and at once came under the influence of Connolly, the prince of Irish Bolsheviks. Taken prisoner during the Easter rebellion of 1916, he was eventually released with other small fry, and in return devoted himself to the extermination of the British Empire in general, and Irish policemen in particular.

During the spring and summer of 1920, Joyce and his numerous bodyguard, like an Irish chieftain of old, lived like fighting-cocks. Hailed as the conquerors of the British Army (they had shot several unarmed soldiers) wherever they went, not only did they live free, gratis, and for nothing, but the country people literally fought for the honour of entertaining these heroes. A great pity that the lady journalist could not have been present at one of these banquets. What "copy" she could have sent to her editor, and the certified net sale would have soared to the skies.

But though Joyce and his merry men had a great time, they did not neglect their duty; and on every occasion, when conditions were all in their favour, they shot down police patrols from behind walls, and murdered unfortunate policemen when visiting their wives and families.

However, every dog has his day, and in the autumn of 1920, when the British Army and the Auxiliary Cadets started to take a hand in the game, Joyce found himself changed from a popular hero into a hunted outlaw, with the usual result that, where formerly he had found an open door and a smiling welcome, he now was met by a closed door and a scowl; and when seeking board and lodging, it became necessary to persuade the unwilling hosts with a six-shooter.

The police and military now commenced paying calls at night; and a farmer, living in the depth of the country, hearing a knock at his door during the long winter's nights, had always the pleasing excitement of not knowing if he was to have the honour of entertaining some badly-wanted gunmen, a patrol of the R.I.C., a party of Auxiliary Cadets, a military search-party, or merely a posse of local robbers, any of whom might take a sudden dislike to the unfortunate farmer, with unpleasant results.

In the winter of 1920, Joyce, who would have made an excellent soldier, made the bad mistake of mixing up love with war; in other words, he became greatly enamoured of a girl living in the South, and in order to be within reach of her, confined his attentions to that district for a considerable time, instead of moving about the country with his usual rapidity; and the Auxiliaries, getting an inkling of the situation from a former lover of the girl, made a great effort to surround and capture him.

Though he received repeated warnings of the activity of the Cadets, Joyce put off his departure, until a day came when word was brought that the place was surrounded by forces of the Crown, who would close in on the little town that evening.

Joyce at once went to tell Molly, whose father kept a small hotel in the town, and the girl's quick wit soon thought out a plan of escape for her lover. Five commercial travellers staying in the hotel, and at the time out touring neighbouring villages, had left their heavy cases of samples at the hotel, and their railway passes in the safe keeping of the hotel proprietor.

That afternoon the train to the West carried Joyce and four of his bodyguard disguised as bagmen; the remainder were left to shift for themselves, and that evening, when the Cadets searched the town from attic to cellar, they found that the principal bird had flown.

Joyce knew that it would not be safe to travel by train

as far as Ballybor, and as soon as he thought that they had cleared the Auxiliary cordon, determined to alight at the next stop and continue the journey by car. Just as they were on the point of leaving the train, however, they noticed several Cadets waiting by the station exit, so did not get out.

Two stations farther on they left the train, and being now outside the net, quickly commandeered a Ford from the local garage and set out for the Ballyrick country, where Joyce had decided to hide and rest for a while. Keeping to byroads, they made their way westwards at a good rate until it was nearly daylight, when, after hiding the car in a wood, they proceeded to search for board and lodging.

Shortly they came across a good farmhouse, and, after the usual display of pistols, were admitted reluctantly, made a hearty meal, and retired to bed after ordering their host to have five good bicycles and another meal ready for them as soon as it was dark.

It has been mentioned that Joyce had worked as a boy at a shooting-lodge near Errinane, and he now conceived the brilliant idea of taking a rest-cure there until such time as the police took less interest in him. This lodge, Drumcar by name, belonged to a Connaught squire who had married an Englishwoman, and except for a short time in the summer was only occupied by a caretaker. Situated in one of the wildest parts of the West, a mile from the road, hidden by woods of oak and birch, and overlooking the bay on which Errinane stands, it was probably the last place in Ireland where the police would think of looking for an active gunman, and the chances were that not a single Auxiliary even knew that such a place existed.

The gunmen arrived at Drumcar soon after dawn, and after rousing the terrified caretaker, who lived with his son and daughter in a cottage in the grounds, they settled down to a life of peace and comfort. The girl attended on them, while the old man brought food from Errinane in a donkey cart, and a good supply of poteen from a mountain farm near the mouth of the bay.

The lodge was well supplied with turf, contained an excellent library of novels and Joyce and his men waxed fat with good living and soft lying; but it is a case of once on the run, always on the run, until the inevitable end comes, or the gunman is lucky enough to escape to the States.

Now, it is a well-known truth in the West that a "mountainy" man will always, when sick unto death, homesick, or in dire distress, make for his beloved mountains, no matter what far end of the world he may have drifted to; and when in due course Blake learnt through official channels that Joyce had escaped from the southern town, he at once began to keep a sharp look-

out for him in the Ballyrick country.

But when a fortnight passed and there was no sign of Joyce, nor yet any report of his presence in that part of the country, Blake turned up the man's official record, from which he learnt two interesting facts: first, that Joyce had worked at Drumcar; and, secondly, that he had a married sister in Bunrattey, a district on the southern border of Blake's country.

Blake now turned his attention to the sister's house, and when this proved a blank, he determined to try Drumcar Lodge as a last resource; but at the time of the landing of arms at Errinane, every police barrack and coastguard station within a radius of many miles had been burnt, so that it was impossible to get any news of the place without going there, the nearest barrack in Blake's district being fifty miles away.

A "travelling circus" of Auxiliaries happened to be passing through Ballybor, and the leader undertook to investigate the lodge and let Blake know if they found any trace of Joyce. Blake advised them to surround the lodge in the daytime, as, owing to the wild and mountainous nature of the country, a night attack would be impossible.

On the whole, the gunmen treated old Faherty, the caretaker, and his children well, especially the son, Patsy, in the hope that he would join them; but, luckily for himself, the lad had a wholesome dread of firearms. After he had been at the lodge some days, in spite of feeling quite secure, Joyce, with the instinct of the hunted, began to look about for a bolt-hole in case of need; though in the midst of the wilds the lodge had serious drawbacks, being situated on the side of a slope, so that any one leaving the lodge would at once come under observation from several points, and, moreover, an arm of the sea cut off all escape to the north.

In fact, escape seemed very doubtful, until by chance Patsy mentioned that in a boat-house, hidden by trees, on the shore of the bay, there was a large motor-launch, which he had learnt to drive the previous summer. The next time the old man went to Errinane for provisions, he brought back with him twenty gallons of petrol (duly entered up in his absent master's account), and Joyce felt easier in his mind.

On a pouring wet afternoon the five gunmen were playing nap in front of a comfortable turf fire in the drawing-room, while old Faherty's daughter brewed poteen punch for them, and Patsy was reading a novel in an arm-chair, when a long-haired boy dashed in with the news that a large party of Auxiliary Cadets had rushed through Errinane, taken two countrymen they had met on the road as guides, and were surrounding the lodge from all

sides except the sea. Joyce had launched the motor-boat only the previous day, and within a few minutes they were under way, heading for the mouth of the bay with the throttle full open. Seeing the launch in the bay below them as they reached the front of the lodge, the Cadets opened fire, but before they could get on to their target the launch vanished in the thick mist of rain.

As pursuit was out of the question, the Auxiliaries drove straight to Errinane Post Office, only to find the wires cut. They then went on to the nearest town, and wired to the naval authorities at Queenstown, hoping that they might be able to get in touch with a destroyer off the west coast by wireless, and so capture Joyce at sea.

Joyce knew that the hue-and-cry would be up, and that it would be fatal to land anywhere on the coast near Errinane; and as the sea was calm, he made up his mind to cut across a big bay to the north and make for Buntarriv, a narrow passage between an island and the mainland, which would lead them to Trabawn Bay, on the shores of which lay his own country.

The launch left the slip at Drumcar at 1 P.M., and Joyce made out that at eight miles an hour they ought to reach Buntarriv Sound at four o'clock and Trabawn Bay in another hour, which should give them plenty of time to land before darkness set in. Unfortunately, when out in the open Atlantic, the engine stopped, and Patsy, who was thoroughly frightened by now, would only sit down and cry. Two of the gunmen knew something of motors, and after nearly two hours discovered that the carburetter was choked with dirt, and it was nearly six o'clock before the Sound was within sight: another quarter of an hour and they would have been too late. As it was, a destroyer opened fire on them just as they were entering the Sound, and they were only saved by the failing light.

Knowing that the destroyer could not follow them, and afraid of wrecking the launch in the dark, they anchored and waited for the moon to rise, and eventually landed on the shore of Trabawn Bay. Joyce was at last in his own country, and before day broke the gunmen were safely lodged in different mountain farms close to Joyce's home, and the next day Patsy was handed over to the local Volunteers to be returned to Drumcar. The following day they took the launch to a bay surrounded by high cliffs, where no human being except an odd herd ever went, and beached her at the height of the tide on the sandy shore, where they left her for future use.

After a few days at home Joyce began to get restless, and resolved to visit his married sister in the Bunrattey district; but the local Volun-

teers could only supply them with two bicycles, and the distance was too far to walk—forty-two miles as the crow flies. However, he learnt from a postman that a police patrol visited Ballyscaddan, a small village about sixteen miles east of Ballyrick, daily, and were in the habit of leaving their bicycles outside a public-house which they frequented.

The gunmen spent the night in Ballyscaddan, and about eleven o'clock a patrol of six R.I.C. arrived in the village, left their bicycles outside the public-house, and went inside to refresh themselves. The gunmen, who were waiting in the next house, quickly cut the tyres of one bicycle to ribbons, and rode off on the remaining five, leaving the unfortunate villagers to bear the brunt of the infuriated policemen's wrath. That night Joyce and his four men slept in his sister's house in Bunrattey.

Besides his courage, the only redeeming feature about Joyce appears to have been his love for this sister. As usual, she was delighted to see him, but by now the other inhabitants would have as soon welcomed the devil himself as Joyce, knowing that his progress through the country was blazed by reprisals.

Gone were the days when he used to hold audience daily in his sister's house like a king, and men came many miles simply to see the famous Denis Joyce. Now the country people would avoid him on the road, and not a single person came to see him.

His sister warned him repeatedly that it was dangerous to stay any length of time with her; but Joyce seems to have lost heart, or perhaps his Celtic soul had a premonition of coming disaster. At any rate he refused to go, and spent most of this time sitting by the kitchen fire brooding.

Blake soon learnt of Joyce's escape by sea from Drumcar, and feeling sure that sooner or later he would visit his sister before starting operations in the South again, concentrated his attention on that district. To this end, he kept his men well away, and at the same time asked for the help of the Auxiliary "travelling circus," among whom were three Cadets who knew Joyce well by sight.

One of these Cadets, whose personal appearance favoured the disguise, was dressed up as a priest, and sent out on a bicycle to spy out the land. After two days he returned with the good news that he had passed the famous gunman on the road in Bunrattey, and at once Blake made preparations to surround the place that night.

He knew that success entirely depended on maintaining complete secrecy until the house was surrounded, and that if even a whisper of what was in the air got abroad all chances of capturing Joyce were gone. Tired of seeing operations ruined by well-advertised Cross-

leys, bristling with rifles, tearing along the main roads, he determined to try and catch his man by cunning.

Directly he received the news that Joyce was at Bunrattey, he left Ballybor Barracks with four Crossleys, two of R.I.C., and two of Auxiliaries, in the opposite direction to which Bunrattey lay, until they came to a small village about ten miles to the north, where there was a large flour-mill. Surrounding the mill, the police carried out a perfunctory search and left just before dark, taking with them two of the miller's lorries, one empty, and the other loaded with flour sacks and two large tarpaulins, cutting the wires as soon as they were clear of the village.

Making their way eastwards until they reached a long stretch of desolate bog-road, they halted with one tender about a quarter of a mile behind and another the same distance ahead. They then proceeded to transfer half the flour sacks to the empty lorry, built them up with a hollow in the middle so that both lorries appeared to be fully loaded, filled the hollows with police, and then threw a tarpaulin over each.

The two lorries then set off to make a large detour in order to approach Bunrattey from the south (the opposite direction to Ballybor), and Blake made out that they ought to arrive there about midnight. The four Crossleys waited and followed at a time which should bring them to Bunrattey a quarter of an hour after the arrival of the lorries.

Joyce's sister's house stood back from the main road about eighty yards, was one-storied, very strongly built, and had a tremendous thatch of straw; to the front there were four small windows, heavily shuttered, and a stout oak door, and at the back only a door of the same kind. At a distance of about thirty yards from the house a low stone wall ran round the sides and back, enclosing a small cabbage garden and the haggard, which gave excellent cover for the police.

The lorries stopped within 400 yards of the house, and the police quickly and silently surrounded it without raising the alarm. They then waited for the arrival of the Crossleys, when the Auxiliaries and the remainder of the police formed a second cordon outside the first one.

The leading lorry was now brought into the lane which led up to the house, and left there with the acetylene lamps shining full on the front door and windows, and at the same time the lamps of the second lorry were taken to the back of the house and mounted on the wall, so that any one attempting to leave the house by the doors or windows would be in the full glare of the powerful lamps.

Approaching the house from a gable-end, Blake crawled along the front until he reached the door, on which he ham-

mered with the butt of his revolver, and called on the inmates to surrender, telling them that they were surrounded and that resistance only meant death. Receiving no answer, he called out that if they did not come out at once with their hands up, he would open fire on the house, and for reply there came a volley of bullets through the lower part of the door. He then crawled back to cover, and ordered his men to open fire on the front door with a machine-gun.

The concentrated fire of a machine-gun will cut a hole through a nine-inch brick wall in a very short time, and in a few minutes the oak door was in splinters. While the machine-gun kept up a continuous fire at the height of a man's chest, four policemen endeavoured to get into the house by crawling up to the door, but when a few feet away two were shot, and the remaining two only escaped by rolling to one side.

All that the police had to do now, provided that Joyce was in the house—and the resistance offered made this a certainty—was to wait until daylight, when the certain capture of the gunmen would only be a question of time. But by now Blake was excited, and remembering how O'Hara had slipped through his hands, he determined to burn the rats out and finish the show. After getting a tin of petrol from one of the cars, he again crawled up to the gable-end, set a light to the tin, and flung it on to the thatch, which at once took fire, burning fiercely.

Only a few days previously this part of the thatch had been renewed, and as the weather had been fine it was bone-dry. But after a few minutes the fire reached the old and wet thatch, and as there was a gentle breeze blowing from the front, very soon the back of the house was completely hidden by a cloud of smoke.

Realising the mistake he had made, Blake ordered his men to keep up a continuous fire on the back door, and at the same time rushed the machine-gun round to that side; but so blinding was the smoke by now that it was impossible to know where the back door was.

Hearing shouts from the front, on going there he found a young woman standing in the doorway with her hands up, who told him that all the men in the house were wounded and unable to move. On entering they found three of Joyce's bodyguard and his brother-in-law lying in pools of blood on the kitchen floor, but not a sign of Joyce or the fourth man.

There was still a chance that the missing two might be found wounded outside the back door, which was ajar, but the smoke was still so dense that no one could approach. After a time the smoke abated, and they found the fourth man dead a few yards from the house, but not a sign of Joyce.

Again working on the theory that the gunman would make for his home in the Ballyrick mountains, which lay to the westward at the back of the house, Blake divided his forces into two, sending each out on a flank in order to get well ahead of the fugitive, and then form a fan-shaped net and beat backwards towards the house. Four miles away to the west was the Owenmore river, which ran northwards through Ballybor, and across the river were two bridges, each about four miles from where they were.

The two forces crossed by different bridges, each dropping three men at the bridges, then went on about three miles, and at daybreak started to beat the country back to the bridges. Here they arrived, worn out, at 10 A.M., and not a sign had any one seen or heard of Joyce.

Sure that Joyce had crossed the river, the police started to beat back again over the ground they had just covered; but by 4 P.M. the men were done in, and Blake had to call them off and return to Ballybor.

That night he got out a large-scale Ordnance map of the Bunrattey district, put himself in Joyce's place, and tried to think out his line of escape, presuming that the fugitive had avoided the bridges and swum the river at the nearest point from his sister's house. On crossing the river he would soon come to a thick wood on the slope of a hill, through which the railway line to Ballybor ran, and here he decided that Joyce must be hiding.

Early the next morning Blake set out with a strong force, and approaching Derryallen Wood from all four sides at once, spent the rest of the day beating the wood through and through, but without any result, and they came to the conclusion that by now Joyce must have got clear.

A week afterwards, when Blake was returning in the dusk from Grouse Lodge Barracks, a man stopped the car on an open stretch of road about a mile outside Ballybor. The man turned out to be the loyal guard of the goods train, and he told Blake that for several days past he had seen the engine-driver drop a parcel as the train passed through Derryallen Wood, and always at the same place, into a patch of briers on the side of the line.

Blake's interest in Joyce awoke afresh, but he felt sure that no living being had escaped them on the day when they searched the wood, and they had not been able to find any trace of a hiding-place. However, it would be interesting to know what the engine-driver dropped when passing through the wood, and by whom it was picked up.

The main road from Ballybor to Castleport ran parallel with the railway, skirting the east side of Derryallen; and here, on a pitch-dark winter's night, in torrents of rain, two Crossleys stopped for a couple of minutes while Blake and a

party of R.I.C. and Cadets dropped out, and then drove on again.

With great difficulty the party found their way in the dark to the railway line, where they remained hidden in some laurels until it began to grow light, when they were able to conceal themselves within easy reach of the patch of briers.

After hours of weary waiting the goods train passed down, and the engine-driver dropped the parcel into the briers. At once the police forgot hunger and cold in their eagerness to see who would pick up the parcel, but again they were doomed to hours of weary waiting.

At last, when the men had nearly reached the limit of their endurance and light was almost gone, they saw a most miserable-looking wild-eyed man crawling painfully towards the patch of briers. When he was within five yards of the parcel Blake called on him to surrender, and every man covered him with his rifle.

Game to the end, though unable to stand on account of a bullet-wound in one leg, Joyce drew his pistol and glared defiance at the police; but as he raised himself to fire, a fifteen-stone Cadet, who had crept up silently behind him, flung himself on the famous gunman's back, and the long chase was over.

Joyce refused to show Blake his hiding-place, but afterwards they learnt from the owner of the wood that there was a cave in the middle of the wood which had been used by robbers over a hundred years ago, the entrance of which was completely covered by thick heather.

VII. THE STRANGER WITHIN THE GATES.

After the loss of the American arms the district of Ballybor remained quiet for some considerable time, so that the hard-working farmers in the country and respectable shopkeepers in the town began to hope at last that the trouble was over, and that they might be free to carry on their work in peace. Unfortunately, a quiet and peaceful district is anathema to the Sinn Fein G.H.Q., and before long a Volunteer flying column received orders to operate in the Ballybor district, with a view to stirring up trouble and bringing the county into line with the South.

By this time the large moderate element of Sinn Fein, in other words, practically every man who had a stake in the country — substantial farmers with haggards to burn, and prosperous shopkeepers with shops to burn—realised that they had backed a losing horse, and were prepared to do any mortal thing for peace, except help the police. Unfortunately, the farmers' sons and shop-boys, who, in the usual course

of events, but for the war, would have been in the States by now, took quite a different view. £20 in the £ rates, burnt haggards, and ruined businesses meant nothing to boys who paid no rates nor owned shops or farms.

Up to the winter of 1919 the rebels moved about the country in motors, how, when, and where they liked. Even during the time when every gallon of petrol was being kept for the armies in France, and the Loyalists were only allowed six gallons a month (on paper), De Valera and his staff burnt petrol as freely as a Connaught peasant will drink poteen. In connection with this, it would be interesting to know into whose petrol tanks the many thousands of gallons of petrol which was washed up on the western shores of Ireland from torpedoed vessels passed, and the system of collection and distribution.

After this winter, when the use of cars for illegal purposes became more and more restricted as the car-permit regulations became s tricter and more rigidly enforced, the Volunteers began to make great use of bicycles, and their flying columns consisted of cyclists only. Orders were issued from G.H.Q. that every Volunteer must be able to ride a bicycle, and local commandants were instructed to see that every man in their command had one.

During the Mons retreat the cyclists were invaluable, both for fighting small rearguard actions and also for keeping in contact with the enemy. During the present war in Ireland, the explanation of the mysteries of how men can shoot policemen from behind a wall and then disappear into thin air, and of how a column of gunmen can shoot up a train in Kerry on Monday and ambush a police lorry in Clare on Tuesday, is to be found in the intelligent use of the humble push-bike. And until the authorities round up every push-bike in Ireland, these mysteries will continue.

As soon as G.H.Q. determined that the Ballybor district must be brought into line with the South, a small party of gunmen, operating at the time many miles to the south, received their orders, and late that night a silent and ghostly party of cyclists rode into the Ballybor district. At a certain cross-roads they were met by guides, and long before daybreak the gunmen were billeted in ones and twos throughout the townland of Cloonalla.

The following night a meeting of the local Volunteers was held in the National School, and the leader of the gunmen insisted that a police ambush or an attack on the Grouse Lodge Barracks should take place within the next few nights. The general opinion being against an attack on the barracks—the field of fire was too good, and the Black and Tans too handy with their rifles—it was settled (by the gunmen) that the police should be am-

bushed at a favourable spot where the main road from Ballybor to Castleport passed through a wooded demesne.

The next morning Father Tom, the parish priest, was besieged by the young Volunteers' fathers, men who had homes and haggards to burn, one and all imploring his reverence to prevent an ambush in the parish, and to save them from the wrath of the Auxiliaries. Some of them, when asked, confessed that the gunmen were staying in their houses, but that their sons had brought them there without leave, and that they were powerless to get rid of them.

From the beginning of the movement Father Tom, who was young for a parish priest and an ardent Sinn Feiner in theory, had been one of the leaders in the district, and even when burning houses and haggards began to follow murderous ambuscades in far-away Co. Cork as surely as day follows night, he still felt a thrill of pride for his countrymen who were giving their all for freedom, and became a fiercer Sinn Feiner than ever; but an ambush (and the sequel) in his own beloved parish was a very different thing, and a calamity to be avoided at all costs (his house stood high, and would give a splendid view at night of burning houses and haggards), and there was obviously no time to lose.

The next day was Sunday, and at mass Father Tom, who was a fine preacher, thundered forth from the altar. A vivid imagination stimulated his eloquence to such a pitch that he reduced most of the older members of his flock to tears.

He told them that it had come to his ears that certain men in the parish were harbouring strangers within their gates, and that these strangers had been trying to incite young and innocent boys to murder policemen. He then described the result of an ambush—how houses were burnt to the ground and women and little children were turned out on the road on a winter's night (he did not mention the men, knowing that by then they would be up in the mountains), and how innocent men were shot in their beds before the eyes of their wives; but he said nothing about the widows and orphans of the murdered policemen. Finally, he warned his flock against the strangers, who would fade away before the wrath of the soldiers and Auxiliaries fell on the parish, and commanded that they should be instantly turned out under the direst penalties. And with a last curse on the strangers he left the chapel.

If Father Tom had thundered from the altar against ambushes many, many months before, instead of openly encouraging the Volunteers, the result might have been very different; but a leader of men who gives an order to-day and a counter-order to-morrow is rarely obeyed. That night it was learnt that a party of

military would proceed from Castleport to Ballybor on Wednesday night, and it was settled to ambush them at the spot chosen in the demesne, the gunmen promising that a carload of arms and bombs would arrive in time for the ambush, and also a doctor.

In the Cloonalla district there lived, nowadays a *rara avis* in the west of Ireland, a Protestant farmer of the old yeoman type so well known in England, and a staunch Loyalist. To his house there came on that Sunday night two of the leading farmers, who told him the whole story of the proposed ambush, and begged him to warn the police.

The chapel of Cloonalla stands in the centre of the parish, close to a cross-roads, and on that Wednesday morning the inhabitants woke up to find a kilted sentry on guard at the cross-roads, and before most of them could get out of bed, two companies of Highlanders, guided by Blake, were hard at work searching every house for strangers.

Blake had brought with him two old regular R.I.C. sergeants, men who had been stationed in the district for years, and who knew every man, young and old; but the gunmen had been in trouble before, and were not to be caught so easily.

They were all young men and clean shaved, and before the police and Highlanders entered any of their billets, one and all were dressed as women with shawls over their heads; and in one house, where two of them had been billeted, the Highlanders found a young woman sitting on a stool by the fire, nursing a baby under her shawl, while another pretty shawled girl was preparing breakfast for the young mother. A big Highlander could not resist giving her a glad eye, little knowing that "she" was a notorious gunman, and wanted to the tune of a thousand pounds for the brutal murder of a D.I. as he was leaving church.

The only result of the raid was the finding of an old shotgun in the bed of the local blacksmith, a man who had always defied the local Volunteers, and kept a gun for poaching only, and who was taken off to Ballybor Barracks amidst the jeers of everybody. However, in a few days they realised how useful and necessary a person a smith is in a country district, and before the week was out the whole townland was clamouring for the smith's release.

However, the raid had good results; the Volunteers refused point-blank to carry out the ambush on Wednesday night, though the gunmen stayed until that day, making every endeavour to bring it off. Finding it was useless, they disappeared that night as silently as they had come, promising to return shortly in greater numbers.

The whole district heaved a

sigh of relief when it was known that there were no longer any strangers within the gates, and settled down to farm and lead the life God meant them to live, and hoped against hope that they might never see a cursed stranger again, be he gunman or Auxiliary. Blake let it be known that it was a case of no ambush, no Auxiliaries, and every farmer in the district was quite content to keep his side of the bargain.

But peace was not yet to be the portion of Cloonalla. Within three weeks of the first gunman leaving, a party of twenty arrived on a wild winter's night, and, as on the former occasion, as silently dispersed to their allotted billets. This time the leader of the gunmen did not ask the local Volunteers to help, but ordered them to carry out the ambush in the wooded demesne on the main road from Castleport to Ballybor, as previously arranged.

The gunmen did not appear during the daytime at all, and had been nearly a week in the district before Father Tom heard of their arrival. Unfortunately, the priest was very ill with influenza at the time, and before he could take any action the damage was done.

As usual, the scene of the ambush was laid with great cleverness. Between the two entrance-gates of the demesne on the main road there was a sharp rise in the form of an S bend, with a thick thorn hedge on each side of the middle of this bend. Where the rise was steepest, there was a lane leading to the keeper's house, about fifty yards from the road, and at the entrance of this lane the gunmen laid a mine in the main road to be fired by an electric wire running towards the keeper's house. After laying the mine they forced the road contractor of that part of the road to cart broken stones and lay them right across the road over the mine, so that all traces of the mine were hidden.

The day after the mine had been laid word came to Cloonalla that the police had arrested three men in Ballybor during the previous night, and that it was thought that the prisoners would be sent to Castleport that night in a Crossley under a strong police escort. As soon as it was dark, the gunmen, after parking their bicycles in a wood of the demesne, collected all the Volunteers they could induce or force to accompany them, and made their way across country to the scene of the ambush.

The night was unusually fine with a full moon, and two hours after the Volunteers and gunmen had taken up their positions, the peculiar note of a Crossley engine could be distinctly heard approaching at a great pace from the Ballybor direction. The gunman who had laid the mine was a first-class electrician, and as the car tore past the lane there was a blinding flash, followed by a terrific roar, and the car

seemed to jump clean off the road and then collapse in a burning heap on the road.

With the roar of the mine the ambushers opened a heavy fire on the car, but receiving no reply they quickly ceased fire, waiting to see what would happen next. But the mine had done its work only too well, and the only sounds which could be heard were the groans of dying men amid the burning ruins of the car. After some minutes two policemen rolled out of the end of the car and lay on the highroad, one man with both his legs paralysed, crying piteously for water, and the second with part of his head blown away by a flat-nosed bullet, crying for a priest.

Up to this point the leader of the gunmen had taken charge of all the proceedings, and when the Volunteers were collected on the road like a flock of sheep they still waited for orders. However, after five minutes, as no order was given, they began to look for their leader, suddenly to realise that every gunman had faded away.

At once every Volunteer started to make his way home as fast as he could, and within two minutes the only occupants of the road were the two dying policemen, lying like two black logs in the white moonlight. Presently a terror-stricken keeper crept out of his house, and as soon as his scattered wits could take in the situation, he got out his bicycle and rode into Ballybor for help.

Long before day broke columns of soldiers, R.I.C., and Auxiliaries concentrated on and met at that horrible scene on the road between the two demesne gates, and shortly afterwards broke like a tornado on the townland of Cloonalla, and Father Tom, from his bedroom window, saw his worst fears realised. When daylight came the parish was at last clear of all strangers and avengers, but at a terrible price.

A quick-witted policeman remembered that the only limestone road in Cloonalla was the road from Ballybor to Castleport, so that it was easy to tell in a house by an inspection of boots if any man of that household had been present at the ambush, and that night the fathers suffered for the sins of their sons, and the sons paid the full price of the gunmen's crime.

Like good soldiers, the gunmen carefully thought out their line of retreat before the ambush took place. They found that a broad river ran through the demesne parallel to and about 400 yards from the main road, that the nearest bridges above and below were five miles away, and that across the river ran a range of wild and desolate country. In a wood on the bank of the river they found fishing-boats, used for netting salmon during the summer-time, and before the ambush the leader sent two of his men to collect all these boats at a certain part of the river, and to remain there in

readiness to take the remainder and their bicycles across. As soon as the ambush was over they collected their bicycles, crossed the river, and were soon riding through a little-known pass in the mountains on their way to carry on their devil's work in a part of the country many miles removed from the scene of the Cloonalla ambush.

VIII. MR BRIGGS' ISLAND.

Several years before the late war there lived in the suburbs of London a prosperous stock-broker, by name Benjamin Briggs, a lonely bachelor, an ardent fisherman, and a man of simple and kindly nature. Every year Mr Briggs spent his entire summer holidays fishing in Scotland or Wales, and it was not until after hearing a friend at his club recounting the wonderful fishing that he had had in Ireland that he turned his attention to that country.

One afternoon, when passing through Euston Station, a famous poster of Connemara caught Mr Briggs' eye, and the following summer he made a complete tour of that delightful country of mountains, moors, and rivers. So charmed was he with the scenery and the perfect manners of the peasants that he determined to see more of the country, and on a fine summer's afternoon found himself in the little town of Ballybor, reputed to be one of the best fishing centres in Ireland.

During a walk through the town before dinner, he happened to see a large notice in an auctioneer's window, offering for sale, at what seemed to Mr Briggs a very low figure, a fishing-lodge on an island in the middle of a large lake, famous for its salmon, trout, and pike-fishing, and distant about six miles from the town of Ballybor. The notice also stated that the auctioneer would be glad to give full particulars, and that the lucky buyer could obtain immediate possession.

Now many of us have cherished a secret longing to possess an island, no doubt an aftermath from reading 'Robinson Crusoe' when very young, possibly in the sea if one has a weakness for that element, or, if not, in the middle of some large lake full of salmon and trout. From childhood Mr Briggs had had two great longings—first, to be a successful fisherman, and secondly, to possess an island, to which he could eventually retire and fish all day and every day.

The following morning, after an interview with the auctioneer, he drove out to the lake on an outside car, was duly met by the caretaker, Pat Lyden, with a boat, fell in love at sight with a comfortable little six-roomed lodge built on the shore of a small green island far out in the lake and

commanding glorious views of mountains and water, and on his return to Ballybor he wasted no time in completing the purchase. The following day he moved to the island, and spent a happy fortnight fishing with Pat Lyden before returning to England.

From the outbreak of war until 1920 Mr Briggs was unable to visit Ireland, but during the summer of that year he decided to retire, and after disposing of his business and suburban home, set out for Ballybor, meaning to spend the rest of the year fishing on Lake Moyra. On a dull morning he landed at Kingstown, as enthusiastic as a schoolboy on his first sporting trip, and longing to see his beloved island once more.

Mr Briggs only read one newspaper,—a paper once famous throughout the world for its impartial and patriotic news and complete freedom from party taint,—and he had not the remotest idea that the Ireland of 1914 and the Ireland of 1920 were two very different countries. But so simple was the little man's nature that he did not realise the state of the country until he reached a small junction about sixteen miles from Ballybor, and where he had to change.

Here he had some time to wait, and while walking up and down the platform a long-haired wild-eyed stranger sidled up to him and asked if he was Mr Briggs; and on learning that he was, the stranger advised him to return to England at once, as the air on Lough Moyra was very unhealthy at present. This greatly disturbed Mr Briggs, but he determined to take no notice of the mysterious warning, and, taking his seat in the train, began to read his papers again.

Shortly before the train was due to start a small party of British soldiers, under a N.C.O., marched on to the platform, and proceeded to take their seats in a third-class carriage. At once the engine-driver, fireman, and guard packed up their kits and prepared to leave the station. The station-master did his best to induce them to take the train on to Ballybor, but not one yard would they go as long as a British soldier remained in the train; and in the end they marched out of the station, amid the laughter of the soldiers, who continued to keep their seats. The civilian passengers now left the train, and Mr Briggs found himself dumped with all his kit on the platform.

For some time he sat there, feeling sure that in the end the train would start, but after two hours he gave it up, and wired to a garage in Ballybor for a car to be sent to the junction. After a further wait of three hours a car turned up, and late that evening Mr Briggs arrived at the hotel at Ballybor, weary and quite bewildered. He seemed to have wandered into a South American republic instead of into the old and pleasant Ireland.

After breakfast the next morning he determined to call on his old friend the D.I. before leaving for the lake, but he hardly recognised the police barracks, which had been transformed from a homely white-washed house into a sand-bagged and steel-shuttered fort. Here he found that his old friend had retired on pension, and in his stead reigned a young and soldier-like D.I., with a row of orders and war ribbons on his breast. Mr Briggs introduced himself, but found that neither the D.I. nor the Head Constable had ever heard of either Mr Briggs or his island, but they told him that only the previous day a police lorry had been ambushed on the road to the lake, and advised him to return to England.

However, having got so far, Mr Briggs determined to see his island, come what might; and after a lot of difficulty, and at a very high price, a driver was at last found with sufficient courage to drive him out to the place where Lyden was to meet him.

Lyden was a typical western peasant, and on former visits Mr Briggs had asked no better amusement than to listen to his quaint remarks and stories for hours on end whilst fishing; but, like the rest of the people, he now seemed a different being. During the row out to the island he did not utter a dozen words, and long before they landed on the little stone quay Mr Briggs had ceased to ask the man any questions. After his long absence the island appeared more enchanting than ever, and from the kitchen chimney he could see the blue turf smoke rising in the still summer's air, reminding him of Mrs Lyden's good cooking.

On approaching the house he was startled to hear loud talking and laughter in the dining-room, and on entering found the room full of strangers, eating a hearty meal. At the head of the table sat a soldierly-looking man, who wished Mr Briggs good-day, and asked who the devil he might be.

On first hearing the voices, Mr Briggs had jumped to the natural conclusion that a fishing party had landed and asked Mrs Lyden to give them something to eat, and he was prepared to welcome them as became a host; but to be asked who the devil he might be, in his own house, was the last straw of the nightmare, and transformed him from a mild English gentleman into a foaming fury. However, the only effect on the strangers of Mr Briggs' rage was to move them to greater mirth, and as he rushed out of the room he heard one man saying that they must have sent them a lunatic this time.

In the kitchen he found Mrs Lyden in tears, and explanations soon followed. For some time past the island had been used as a Sinn Fein internment camp, and his unbidden guests consisted of a

British colonel, two subalterns, a D.I., and a magistrate from a neighbouring county, who had given trouble to the Volunteers by insisting on holding Petty Sessions Courts in opposition to the newly-established Sinn Fein Courts.

Realising that he was a prisoner in his own house, he returned to the dining-room, explained this extraordinary situation to his fellow-prisoners, and then joined them at their meal. When he had finished he went for a stroll with the colonel, who explained matters more fully to him. Most of the prisoners had been on the island for some time, and so far had found no chance of attempting to escape. The colonel himself had been captured whilst salmon-fishing on a river in the South, and then brought blindfolded at night in a car to Lough Moyra.

On inspecting the boat-house, Mr Briggs found that all his boats had gone, even the one Lyden had rowed him out in, which the colonel told him had been brought over from another island, where their guards lived, and that the guards must have returned in her; further, that they were visited every second day by these guards, who brought them food, for which they had to pay a stiff price.

The colonel had unearthed two packs of patience cards, and the three soldiers, with the D.I. for a fourth, played bridge from after breakfast until they went to bed. In the sitting-room there was a small library of Mr Briggs' favourite books, and these kept the rest of the party from drowning themselves in the lake.

Two days after his arrival, and just as he was thinking about retiring for the night, Lyden came in to say that an officer wished to speak to Mr Briggs outside, and on following Lyden he found a man dressed in a wonderful green uniform waiting at the front door. The officer informed Mr Briggs that he had come to take him to a republican court, which was to be held that night on the mainland, and where the case of the Republic *v.* Briggs would be heard. Mr Briggs had never heard of such a thing as a republican court, but could get no further information from the gentleman in green, and shortly afterwards the party set out in a boat for the mainland.

By the time they landed it was quite dark, and after a walk of about twenty minutes they arrived at a large building, which Mr Briggs recognised as Cloonalla chapel, and here the officer handed him over to a local publican, who told him to follow him into the chapel. Inside there was a large crowd of country people, while at one end was a raised table, at which were seated the three judges—two in civilian attire, and the third in the clothes of a priest.

After his eyes had got accustomed to the poor light of the few oil-lamps, Mr Briggs re-

cognised in the presiding judge the parish priest of a neighbouring parish, and in the other two judges a butcher and a good-for-nothing painter from Ballybor. At the time of his entry a river fishing-rights case was before the court, with a Ballybor solicitor acting for the defendant, while another well-known solicitor from the same town acted as "Republican Prosecutor."

After a time the case of the Republic *v.* Briggs came on for hearing, and Mr Briggs learnt, to his great astonishment, that they proposed to take his island and fishing rights on Lough Moyra from him compulsorily for the sum of £200, to be paid in Dail Eirean Bonds, whatever they might be, and that he was to be deported to England as soon as convenient. At the end of the case the presiding judge asked Mr Briggs if he had any objection, but he wisely refused to say anything, and shortly afterwards was handed over to the green officer, who took him back to the island.

A few days after, as Mr Briggs was sitting disconsolately on a rock at the north end of the island, gazing across the lake and wondering if he would ever fish there again, he heard the distant hum of a motor-engine, and in a short time saw a 'plane approaching the island from the south-east. Wild with excitement, he dashed into the house, calling the colonel to come out at once. The colonel got up from the card-table, and on seeing the 'plane quickly collected all the sheets and blankets he could find, and hurriedly spread them out in the form of rough letters, spelling the word "HELP" on the grass in front of the house, and then ran down to the end of the quay, where he waved a sheet frantically over his head.

For what seemed an age to the prisoners, the 'plane took no notice of the colonel's signals; then, to their great joy, the pilot cut off his engine, dropped to about 800 feet, and flew low over the island, turned, flew over the island again, and then made off at full speed in a southerly direction. That night none of the prisoners slept a wink, expecting every minute to hear the sounds of their deliverers' approach.

On the return of the 'plane to the aerodrome a cipher message was at once despatched to Blake, with instructions to investigate the trouble on the island; but, as usual, the message was delayed in the post office, and received too late to take any action that evening. On inquiry, Blake found that, though formerly two police boats were kept on the lake for the purpose of raiding poteen-makers on the islands, some time ago these boats had been burnt, and there was no means of getting out to the islands.

Early the next morning the police borrowed a motor-launch lying in the river at Ballybor, and with difficulty mounted it on a commandeered lorry. Taking a strong police force with

them, Blake and Jones then set out for the lake, deciding to launch the boat at a bay close to Cloonalla chapel. Here the road ran about fifty yards from the lake, but by the aid of rollers they soon got the launch off the lorry and afloat.

Leaving a guard over the cars and lorry, the police then set out for the islands, and all went well until they reached the neck of the bay, which was only about 200 yards wide. Here they came under heavy rifle-fire from the north shore, the attackers being hidden amongst bushes and the ruins of an old cottage.

Unfortunately one of the first shots cut the magneto wire, and the launch at once started to drift helplessly in the wind towards the attackers. While Blake repaired the wire, Jones swept the attackers with a Lewis gun, which quickly smothered their fire, and the wire being soon repaired, the launch got under way again, and made for the open lake at full speed.

Blake had never been on Lough Moyra before, but had brought with him a sergeant who had often taken part in poteen raids on the islands in former days. On looking at an Ordnance map he found that there were two large islands—one with only a fishing-lodge marked on it, and the other with seven houses shown—and on the sergeant's advice they made for the latter, on the assumption that something must have gone wrong with their boats, and that the people might be short of food.

When within about 400 yards of the island they again came under rifle-fire, and realising that they had called at the wrong house, and that it would be impossible to effect a landing except at a heavy loss, they changed their course and made for the second island; but before they got half-way a boat put out from the first island, and made off in the direction of the far shore.

The launch was fairly fast, and in a very short time they were within 600 yards of the boat, when Blake fired a single shot as a signal to it to stop. In reply the boat opened fire on the launch, but one short burst of Lewis-gun fire quickly brought them to their senses, and the occupants put up their hands.

After disarming these men Blake took their boat in tow, and this time succeeded in reaching Mr Briggs' island safely, where he was astonished to meet the prisoners on the quay, and more especially the D.I., who had been missing for some time, and of whom all hope had been given up. The whole party then set off for the mainland, found that the guard had successfully beaten off an attack on the cars, and eventually all returned safely to Ballybor with only two constables slightly wounded.

Two days afterwards Mr Briggs embarked on the s.s. *Cockatoo*, bound for England, where he will probably remain until the war in Ireland is over.

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

A LAND OF UNEXPLOITED ROMANCE—RIO—THE NEGRO'S PARADISE AND A CONTRAST.

It was once said by a Frenchman that Africa began at the Pyrenees. With greater truth may it be said that Lisbon is the beginning of Brazil. The colour and movement of South America are already suggested in the capital of Portugal, shabby though it seems to-day after a bloody and superfluous revolution. And if at Lisbon your mind be attuned to what is to come, you hear the music of the South yet more clearly at Madeira. Whatever is exotic in nature (and in art) begins to show itself. The architecture, such as it is, and the vegetation are alike heralds of what is to follow. And yet when you have passed a few weeks in Brazil you discover that it is but a fragile chain which links the New World with the Old. The resemblances between the Motherland and the daughter which has outstripped her in size and wealth, lie upon the surface. They are there for all men to see. To the eye Lisbon is the harbinger, so to say, of Brazil. An inquiring mind will discern a profound difference between the busy capital of Brazil and that which was historically the parent city.

The truth is that the Brazilians do not look with too kindly an eye upon the cradle of their race. They have outgrown in size and courage the Portugal which gave them birth. They have too readily forgotten the old adventurers who sailed the seas in search of new lands, which they not only found but held. This is no record of disgrace. It is but the story of all the *conquistadors* and buccaneers that ever left their own homes in quest of spices and rubies and gold. And the Brazilians are the more forgetful of their past because in the race for life and wealth they have turned their back resolutely upon their own remarkable history. Theirs is a country without a visible sense of tradition. They have cut themselves off from a long record of noble deeds, and, like other citizens of new worlds, they believe that the present is the essential necessary tie which binds a dead and useless yesterday to that which matters most highly in their esteem — a prosperous, triumphing tomorrow.

To an Englishman, then, Brazil gives an impression of newness. For we Englishmen, whether we know it or not, lean heavily upon the past. We build our homes and we shape our opinions for all time.

Even the institutions which we are always attempting to abolish survive the hostility of the demagogues. How many times has feudalism been destroyed and come to life again? Our history, turned to living romance by the wizard hands of Shakespeare and Scott, is an intimate part of our inheritance. Kings and queens, poets and captains, long since dead and turned to clay, are to our imagination familiar figures. Even though the name of the greatest meat-packer who ever covered the earth with his clattering tins escapes us, we still remember with a kind of affection Elizabeth, the virgin queen, and the poets and heroes who lent lustre to her reign. The Brazilians, on the other hand, turn away with indifference from their splendid and ample past. It is not as though they had no memories in which to take a just pride. The discovery of their land by the Portuguese; its ultimate settlement, in spite of the aggression of France and Holland; the wonderful legend of Eldorado; the perilous ill-fated voyage of the gallant Raleigh; the foundation of Rio de Janeiro by Mem de Sá; the dramatic escape of Dom João from Lisbon, his governance, his empire across the sea; the sudden disastrous departure of Dom Pedro from Brazil in 1889—here is the material of a vast deal of history and romance. If only a Walter Scott could be born in Brazil to revivify the past, and to give the Brazilians a worthy delight in their native land and its legends, there might perhaps be a change of thought throughout the country. The debt which we owe to our poets is plain for all to see. From the time when Bishop Percy began to gather his ballads to the day when Sir Walter Scott laid down his pen, there was a continuous rediscovery of our ancient history and our ancient sentiment. And this rediscovery affected not only our literature, but our life, our policy, and our ambition.

If, then, Sir Walter came to Brazil, he would find the stuff of national romance ready to his hand. The catalogue of the vast collection of books relating to Brazil, made with the greatest diligence and understanding by Dr Carlos Rodrigues, and now in the National Library of Rio, fills two large volumes, and is the most eloquent testimony to the wealth which Brazil may boast of legend and history. Unhappily, to the most of Brazilians this wealth is unknown and uncared for. They see in the life of every day nothing more than a constant struggle with the elements and with adverse fortune. The impending crop of coffee, in one State at least the common currency, absorbs the energies of good Brazilians. They talk coffee, and drink it, from morning to night. It colours their thoughts and guides their actions. As it is the foundation of wealth, so

it is the basis of political controversy, and the President of São Paulo may well tremble in his shoes if he neglect the interests of those who own and manage the fazendas in the uplands of the interior, and of those others who export it from the busy restless port of Santos.

How, then, in a world of coffee and engineering should men find time to ponder upon the past? And Brazil, like other countries which refuse to grow old, and keep their youth alive and alert by commercial enterprise, remains indifferent to the spell of tradition. It has, as it were, cut itself adrift from the past. Other countries invite you to marvel at their museums, their galleries, and their universities, in which are gathered and treasured the spoils of the past. Brazil has very little to show you which will help you to reconstruct her colonial period. Her sense of practical life dispenses, as we have said, with these civilising influences. There are old houses and old churches in Rio and elsewhere, but they must be sought for with industry; and characteristic as they are, they amaze rather than enchant the sightseer. We caught our first glimpse of Brazilian, or Portuguese, art at Bahia, where the Church of S. Francisco shows us what the rococo style may achieve when carried to the highest pitch of extravagance. A triumph of ingenuity, it recalls (at its worst) the shell-boxes which early Victorian trippers were wont to bring back from Margate, and then suddenly astonishes you by the busy fertility of its invention. For it is amusing always, and passes the severest test of all—a comparison with the exquisite blue-and-white tiles, a happy memory of the Dutch occupation, which cover with pagan myths the cool wide spaces of its walls.

The impression of Bahia may be deepened at Rio, if the traveller be fortunate enough to discover there the Convent of the Jesuits. Here also the rococo has been given freedom to display its eccentricities. Its several chapels are brilliant with azure and gold, and the temperate hand of time is not permitted to chasten its brilliance. At the very moment when we visited it, it was renewing its primitive splendour, and the crude colours of its images, carved in solid relief, were being sedulously restored. Yet it is no mere lure of curiosity which draws the traveller thither. The sacristy is full of beautiful furniture, and awoke in our minds a memory of Toledo; nor shall we easily forget the long white-washed chamber in which the brethren sit in council on high-backed chairs, recalling the masterpieces of our own Jacobean style. Everywhere in the convent you may see the signs of a southern sumptuous art. Sumptuous are the images, set in many a niche and corner, and they lose none of their

effect because their robes and accessories are contrived with all the resources of realistic ingenuity. But the Convent of the Jesuits is but an interlude of ancientry—it is no older than the eighteenth century—in a modern town; and as, emerging from its solemn portal, we look down upon the streets of Rio, we get a still more lively impression of the glitter and bustle of to-day.

In England, as in France, we delight in museums. We do reverence to the continuity of our history by bringing together specimens of those lesser arts which have embellished the lives of our forefathers. The Brazilians, though they are rich in the possession of fine furniture and noble plate, have not yet reconstructed, as well they might, an adequate picture of their past. They still lack such a museum as we boast in South Kensington. And this lack is the more sadly to be deplored because, if it were once established, it might easily be packed with treasures. The tall leathern-backed chairs, stamped with armorial bearings, the solid chests, the beaten silver, which filled the houses of the Brazilians in the old colonial days, may still be found in the houses of the curious, and could furnish forth such a museum as few capitals in Europe would surpass. But the modern citizen of Rio is, as we have said, little conscious of his past. It is of small interest to him to note that the style of furniture in Brazil lagged behind the fashion of Europe; that her artificers were still beneath the influence of the seventeenth century when the eighteenth was far advanced; and that, even in the act to imitate the models of France or England, their artificers preserved a style and manner distinctively their own. In the houses of the wise you may now and again surprise the ancient tradition of Portuguese art, you may look upon the beauty of the blue-and-white tiles, which the Dutch brought with them to the South. But you will learn the lesson in fragments, until the Brazilians, awake to the splendour of their past, show us a picture not only of what they are, but a picture of what they were.

It is this break in continuity, this neglect of tradition, which make the domestic architecture of Brazil a disappointment. In few cities will you see so many pleasure-houses as in Rio, São Paulo, and the rest. Nothing is wanting here save a traditional taste. There is wealth and an abundance of excellent material, stone and brick and hard wood of beauty unsurpassed. And the architects, because the link is broken between them and the past, are content to aim at prettiness. Their houses resemble sometimes bird-cages, or bride-cakes, or painted boxes, or anything except places where one would live and sleep and work. At Petropolis, for instance, a town of luxury, set

down in the mountains in the midst of a tropical forest, you may find houses of every style and shape—Moorish palaces, French chateaux, Scottish castles—all ill-fitted to be the near neighbours of lofty ferns, bamboo hedges, palms, and banana-trees. And this habit which the architects have, of expressing themselves in fancy, is the more easily condemned, because side by side with what is thought to be elegant eccentricity you may find houses of great comfort and simplicity, with broad verandahs as refuges from the sun, designed after a fashion appropriate to the exotic landscape. Indeed, all that is needed to perfect the architecture of Brazil is a stern return to the style of the colonial period. There is no lack of models, and if only an architect would come to recreate the past, Brazil might reveal to us again a style, national alike in purpose and character.

But if Brazil seems to have lost the visible tradition of its past, there is one tradition to which she remains faithful, and of this the traveller is acutely sensible. She is sincere and lavish in her hospitality. The Brazilians are patriarchal in the welcome they hold out to the coming guest. They delight most generously in the presence of strangers. They wish to impart to others the just pride which they take in their own country. No sooner does the traveller land at Rio than he is made at home: he is permitted the use of the pleasantest clubs. He is shown the sights with a thoughtful assiduity. He is given special carriages in the trains, and is asked to pay nothing for the ease and the comfort which they provide. There is, moreover, a happy familiarity which greets him everywhere. The friend of a day becomes the friend of all days, and the stranger accepting the kindness offered him, thinks at last that he has strayed back into an age of gold.

Here, then, is the paradox of Brazil. On the one hand, the eager business of life seems to retard the progress of the arts. A keen sense of reality may exaggerate in the voyager's eyes the importance of coffee and of the wealth which it implies. On the other hand, the general kindliness makes the entertainment of the wandering guest and the speeding of him on his way appear the whole and natural duty of men. How, then, should you take leave of Brazil save with a profound sense of gratitude to those who have made your sojourn there a pleasure and a delight?

Nature, said Sir Thomas Browne, is the art of God, and if now and again we miss the art of man in Brazil, the art of God never fails us. From the first moment that Rio comes in sight, you know yourself in presence of a masterpiece. The sea and the mountains combine to achieve such

an effect as you will seek elsewhere in vain. You enter the land-locked harbour, in which all the fleets of the world might ride comfortably at anchor, through what seems a narrow channel. On the one side lies the city itself, on the other, half-hidden in the distance, there peers out the little town of Nitheroy. In the distance are the shadowy, mist-covered mountains, in one peak of which Petropolis is concealed, and nearer at hand are the rocky eminences which give to the harbour of Rio its abiding character. Here is the Sugar Loaf, the authentic mark and symbol of the Brazilian capital. There towers high above the houses the marvellous Corcovado, and not far off Gavea stands up and takes the morning like a fortress. The granite hills which guard the bay might have been imagined by a mediæval painter, or borrowed from an ancient Chinese drawing. Instinctively you look for their match in the works of man. In nature they remain without parallel and alone.

If your courage fail you not, you may mount the Sugar Loaf in a carriage—that is, swing from hill to hill on a cable. The journey is worse to look upon than to achieve, and great is your reward when you reach the summit. Thence, indeed, you dominate Rio. On the one hand is the bay, on the other is the open Atlantic, and the way northward to Europe and to home. To your bird's-eye view the city itself is half revealed: the tall buildings of the Avenida appear but as so many dolls' houses, and behind the mountains give promise of rain and breezes and cool nights.

For, in truth, the sun is the undisputed tyrant of Rio. His edicts are discussed and accepted in enforced obedience by the loyal citizens. It is not surprising that the weather is the constant inevitable subject of talk. How should you help thinking about the heat, which can, if it will, deprive you of sleep and strength and comfort? And if the tyrant be inexorable, no refuge is left you, save Petropolis, the pleasure city among the hills, where politicians and ambassadors take refuge from the summer heat. The railway which takes you thither, brilliant with flowering trees, climbs some three thousand feet through hanging woods, reveals to you as it climbs enchanting views of Rio, and is an excellent specimen of man's conquest over nature.

The real constant need of Brazil is labour. A vast part of the country is yet unexplored, and of that which is explored much would produce far greater wealth than it does if only there were more men to sow and to gather the crops. If you visit a fazenda, you will hear the same tale told day after day: "This cannot be done, that cannot be done, because we lack the hands that should do it." To repair the terrible damage which was done

to the coffee three years ago by a devastating, unexpected frost has passed the wit of man. The owners of the land dream of the immense riches which cotton or sugar or tea or cattle would yield them if only they could enrol the necessary labourers. The little "colonies," as they call the settlements of foreigners upon the fazendas, are packed with men, whose value ensures their independence, and they are not enough. You may find towns upon the map, bearing such names as Nova Odessa, towns which mark the attempts, not always successful, to establish industrious foreigners upon Brazilian soil. Italians, Germans, Japanese, negroes have all been tried with varying results. The one constant factor is that work still remains undone. Thus it is that unemployment is unknown in Brazil, and that the workman, conscious of his value, can make his own terms. In many a remote plantation you will see maize growing between the long lines of coffee-trees, and exhausting for a trivial result the rich red earth. And the master cannot protest against this manifest sacrifice of his wealth. The "colonists" insist that the maize, which is their staple food, should grow in the neighbourhood of the coffee-trees which they tend, and there is an end of it. And this shortage of labour has hindered the progress of Brazil ever since the first Portuguese settled upon its coasts. The native Indians died at their first impact with the white man or retired into the interior, whither the intruders, as they thought then, could not follow. And the Brazilians, in despair, did what other pioneers in desert lands were compelled to do. They imported negroes from Africa, and they held them as slaves.

For more than 250 years this importation continued, and in 1888 the institution of slavery, upon which the prosperity of Brazil had been established, was finally abolished. The emancipated slaves showed, as elsewhere, a reluctance to work hard when they were paid for it, and gave to Brazil, as a necessary inheritance, the doubtful blessing of a mixed population. Thus Brazil has suffered from the curse which falls upon all those who take the shortest road to prosperity by admitting to their country the men and women of an inferior race. Better for her might it have been had she kept her blood pure, and let a slowly-growing population find its way to wealth. However, she followed the easy path, and the result is plain for all to see. Bahia, where first we caught sight of Brazil, gave us the impression of a black town. There are negroes everywhere. The beggars, who clamour for alms outside the Church of S. Franciso, are coloured one and all. They are coloured also who drive carts, lift weights, and do the simple work of the city. At Rio the mulatto seems to prevail, and it may

be said that colour dwindles as you go south. To us, who guard an inherited prejudice against any mixture with the black race, who look upon the thick lips and protruding jaw of the negro as the marks of an ugly inevitable inferiority, it is difficult to understand the easy treatment which Brazil accords to the full-blooded African and to his descendants of whatever shade of brown they may be. In truth, Brazil may be called the negro's paradise. As far as may be seen, no distinction whatever is made between black and white. Men of the two races live and work side by side; they ride in the same trams; their children go to the same schools; and use and wont do a vast deal, no doubt, to weaken the barrier which nature has placed between them. The large number of mulattoes which are visible in Rio, for instance, prove that there is little reluctance on the part of white to intimacy with black. And more than this: the black man enjoys the full rights of citizenship. He votes at elections, and finds his way, now and again, to the Chamber or the Senate. One of the most distinguished of modern Brazilians is said to have had a negro ancestor; and a touch of black blood, a Brazilian told me, is not a bad thing, as it ensures a temper of enthusiasm! There is discernible, to be sure, a certain exclusiveness. But the exclusiveness goes no further than this: those whose blood is unmixed cherish, justly enough, a social pride. They have no contempt for those not equally fortunate. They note the lapses of others with tolerance, and at the same time feel an inward satisfaction in the purity of their blood.

And so it is claimed that in Brazil the problem of colour has been definitely solved. Obviously there exists no open feud between the two races. No feeling of repulsion is manifested by white to black. The Brazilians do not take the law into their own hand and lynch offending negroes. If, on the one hand, there is no insolence, on the other there is no disdain. Yet surely it is too early to say that the question of colour in Brazil has been asked and answered. The answer is merely postponed. If the races are destined ultimately to be mixed, if black is to be absorbed in white, then we shall not find an answer to the question for many generations. For our part we dread the tolerance which would admit an inferior race into equality with a superior. At present the inferior race is said to be decreasing, in spite of large families. We are told that it is unable to resist disease as white men resist it, and that of the many children born to it few survive the common ills of childhood. But we are not sure that this statement is not made merely because those who make it wish it to be true, and certain

it is that the progress of medical science will check infant mortality even among those of African descent. Is it not, then, more probable that black should absorb white than that white should absorb black? Of the two incompatibles, the lower may easily conquer the higher in the struggle for life. It is the race which breeds the faster, not the race which has the better brain, that ultimately survives. The invincible Celt, for instance, imposed his speech upon the Iberian race which he conquered. He imposed little else. And the mischievous Iberian still parades a name and fame which do not belong to him, and affecting an ancestry which is not his, befogs the mind of the people.

Therefore they look not far enough into the future who declare optimistically that the black will be absorbed in the white, and that there will be an end of it. To debase the race is a far greater danger than to debase the currency. Prosperity may restore a debased currency to its ancient purity. No triumph in policy or finance will ever help us to wash away the taint of an alien blood. Yet in one respect the Brazilians may boast that they have tackled the problem of black and white with tact and skill. They have bridged the abyss between slavery and freedom without disgrace or disaster. They have not used the African as a pawn in the political game, and they have not aroused in their unwelcome companions the spirit of anarchy and revolt. Their policy has been to leave them alone, to let them work as they will and mingle with others as they will—to pretend, in fact, that the colour of a man's skin is of no importance. As a temporary expedient, this policy cannot be impugned. It is only when we consider it in relation to the future of the race that it appears hazardous, even if for the moment it be convenient. The truth is that if you invite or compel men of an inferior race to do your work for you, you must suffer for your love of ease and progress. To carry thousands of negroes from Africa to America is to incur a large responsibility. You cannot repatriate them after they have lived for generations upon another soil and learned another speech. They are your neighbours for ever, and it is your business to discover a means of letting them live without disgrace to yourself. Brazil has adopted the method of compliance and absorption; the United States has adopted the method of repression, and the two methods afford a lively contrast.

Whether Brazil has failed or not the future will prove, and the future is not hopeful. That the United States has failed is plain for all to see. There is no doubt that in North America "the nigger question" becomes yearly more acute. We hear on the one hand of outrages, on the other of lynchings.

There are vague rumours that the party of "physical force" among the negroes has an enormous following and a competent leader, and if this be true then will the Americans pay dearly for their changing policy. They have wavered always between the "uplift" and the revolver. They have not dared to proclaim themselves openly upon the side of repression. An irrelevant sentimentality has persuaded them to ask the question, in an hour of crisis, "Are we not men and brethren?" Even in the act of professing the universal brotherhood of man, the Americans denounce, rightly enough, the theory which they have adopted, that black and white are equal. Thus are they enslaved by their own past, and they cannot, if they would, act like free men.

Though the abolition of slavery was in no sense the cause of the war between North and South, it was an inevitable result of the struggle for the Union. Lincoln himself, as all will remember, refused for months to issue an Emancipation Proclamation; and when at last he consented to sign it, dismissed it with the jest that it would be of no more avail than the Pope's Bull against the comet. And when at last the slaves were given their freedom, all the enmities which slavery excited were violently intensified. The blacks were used as so many scourges wherewith to flog the whites of the South, and it is not surprising that henceforth the problem could not be quietly and calmly envisaged. The disputes which raged during the period of reconstruction about the future of the negro not only destroyed the peace of the country, but left it to after generations to answer a question obscured by passion and resentment. The position of the negro was suddenly reversed. By a stroke of the pen he was changed from a slave to a ruler. The lives and fortunes of his former masters were committed to his hands. Mr Louis Jennings, in a forgotten book, 'Eighty Years of Republican Government,' written a year after the termination of the Civil War wisely summed up the situation: "If the North," he wrote, "had been perfectly just in its measures on behalf of what it calls 'human freedom,' the exasperation of the South might not have been so terrible. It boasted of its intentions to give the negro the rights of a citizen, while it systematically denied them to him in its own division of the country. Why did Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, within the space of a few months past, refuse to sanction negro suffrage by overwhelming majorities?" Because, says Mr Jennings, "the Northern people at heart are weary of the negro, and his wrongs, and his pretensions, and his champions, and all that appertains to him. They turn him loose in the South that he may be a scourge to the people who strive to de-

stroy the Government; they give him licence, not because they love him, but because they wish to avenge themselves on his masters, and to hold up a fearful warning to all advocates of secession who may come hereafter."

So the unhappy negro was made the sport of the politicians. He was flattered, cosseted, and educated that the South might be punished for their contempt of the Union. But while he was a master in the Southern States, he was neither man nor brother in the North. Even when the vote was granted him, the threat of a revolver prevented the exercise of his privilege. So he grew up with all the makings of a bitter grievance at his hand, and threatens to perplex the future of the United States with an insoluble problem. Nor can he, poor devil, be blamed for the disturbance which he causes. It was not his fault that he was brought from Africa to do the work which white hands could not do. It was not his fault that, when freedom was given him, he was set up on a pedestal to which Southern gentlemen were invited to bend the knee. But to-day must still pay for the misdeed of yesterday, and no one will envy the United States the task of answering the most difficult question that ever perplexed a politician.

Thus while South America has solved or (if you will) evaded the problem, North America, with the passionate recklessness of the demagogue, has made it almost impossible of solution. And the experience of South and North alike warns us that it is better to keep our race pure and to depend upon the strength of our own hands, even though so doing we delay our material progress for a century. For the mere act of emancipation does not make the black man equal to the white, and ten million aggrieved negroes are not the pleasantest citizens which an enlightened democracy can cherish.

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